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*View of the Historical Column of ANTONINUS at Rome.*

# THE HISTORY OF TUSCANY,

FROM THE EARLIEST ERA ; COMPRISING

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

REVIVAL OF LETTERS, SCIENCES, AND ARTS,

INTERSPERSED WITH ESSAYS ON IMPORTANT LITERARY AND

HISTORICAL SUBJECTS ; INCLUDING

MEMOIRS OF THE FAMILY OF THE MEDICI.

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TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF

LORENZO PIGNOTTI, ROYAL AND GRAND DUCAL HISTORIOGRAPHER, ETC.

BY JOHN BROWNING, ESQ.

DEPUTY PURVEYOR OF THE FORCES ; SEVERAL YEARS RESIDENT  
IN FLORENCE.

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# HISTORY OF TUSCANY.

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## CHAPTER I.

VARIOUS ANTIPOPES DISPUTE FOR THE PAPAL SEE.—LADISLAO, KING OF NAPLES, MARCHES AGAINST TUSCANY.—LEAGUE OF THE FLORENTINES WITH LOUIS II. OF ANGIERS.—THE ALLIED ARMY MARCHES TOWARDS ROME, AND ENTERS IT.—INTERNAL MOVEMENTS.—FLIGHT OF POPE JOHN XXIII. TO FLORENCE.—DEATH OF LADISLAO.—COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE DEPOSES POPE JOHN, AND ELECTS MARTIN V.—MARTIN COMES TO FLORENCE.—THE FLORENTINES OBTAIN LEGHORN FROM THE GENOESE.—RICHES AND PROSPERITY OF FLORENCE.—AFFAIRS OF NAPLES.—REVOLUTIONS OF LOMBARDY.—LEAGUE WITH KING ALFONZO.—NEW LOSSES OF THE FLORENTINES.—LEAGUE WITH THE VENETIANS, WHO GET POSSESSION OF BRESCIA.

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**T**HE pontifical authority had been divided for a considerable time, and the various rivals, Boniface IX.,  
1407. Innocent VII., Benedict XIII., and Gregory XII., had contended for it. The two latter had survived. Gregory had sworn, at his election, that he was ready to renounce the sublime post, as soon as his rival  
1408. Benedict had done the same; in order that, by uniting the two parties, they might unanimously proceed to the election of one pope, and thus put an end to the long dissensions which agitated the church.

The princes, and other governments of Italy, particularly the Florentine republic, used every possible diligence to carry this into effect. The latter even sent ambassadors to the two rivals, in order to induce them to terminate their differences in a council: each gave constantly evasive answers; another attempt was made, but either they were mutually diffident, or feigned to be so, in order not to arrive at the moment in which they were to lay down the pontifical authority; and every treaty failed.

Gregory had gone to Lucca, passing through the territory of the Florentine republic, accompanied by her ambassadors. Although he had solemnly promised, in his exaltation, not to create cardinals, he nevertheless created four in that city. This infraction of promise excited the displeasure of the cardinals of his suite, who abandoned him and retired to Pisa, where those of the party of Benedict also joined them. Here a council was held, in which both the popes were deposed, and the papacy offered to the Cardinal Coscia, principal mover of this machine; the motive is not known, why this ambitious prelate at that time refused a post which he was afterwards so ambitious of, and obtained, and which he even obstinately preserved, until the universal opinion invited him to lay it down. He proposed the Cardinal Peter Zilargo, of Candia, who caused himself to be styled Alexander V.: but the two rivals yielded not on this account; nay, they continued to keep the christian world divided with their partisans.

1409.

During this ecclesiastical war, which the Florentines took so much care to put an end to, Tuscany remained tranquil; and the only event of any note that occurred, was the violent death of the Lord of Cortona, which

happened shortly after the capture of Pisa. This was Francis Casale, who had been of a good and loyal character; in the treaty of recommendation with the Florentine republic he had nominated his nephew, Louis Batista Casale, who was on that account to succeed him: but the latter, either transported by the passion of ruling, or whatever might be the cause, put his uncle to death, and peaceably succeeded him. The Florentines sent Gino Capponi and Cristofano Spire to Cortona to regulate that government, but considered themselves not authorized to make any innovations\*: the tranquillity of Tuscany, however, was about to be disturbed.

Nearly twenty years had now elapsed since the death of Charles, called the Peaceable, of the house of Hungary, conqueror of the kingdom of Naples, and the murderer of Jane, whom a greediness of acquiring new states, at the death of the old Ludwig, King of Hungary, had called back to that kingdom; of which scarcely had he made the conquest, when he was assassinated. Two children had remained in the kingdom of Naples, Jane, a name always unpropitious for that country, and Ladislao, who, when still a child, succeeded to the state; and who, in the midst of broils and agitations, succeeded in establishing himself in it firmly. Dissimulating, enterprising, courageous, he knew how to profit of the disunion of the church, and succeeded in making himself master of Rome. He had hitherto left the Florentines in peace, either that his interests engaged him thereto, or the credit the Count of Mondresio enjoyed, held him in bonds of friendship with Florence. The adventures of this man must not be

\* Amm. Istor. Fior. lib. 17.

passed over in silence by a Florentine historian. Of obscure birth in the district of Scarperia, he was called Cecco Vanni of Senno, the place of his birth, not far from Scarperia, and began his adventures with the trade of a highway robber, for which he was condemned to death. He evaded the punishment by flight, and, applying himself to the profession of arms in the kingdom of Naples, distinguished himself to such a degree\*, that he was created Count of Mondoresio, Marquis of Pescara, and arrived at the office of Viceroy in Abruzzo; he allied himself with the best families, and his daughter brought into the house of Aquino the feud of Mondoresio†. He was very much beloved by King Ladislao, and, being always a lover of his country and his fellow-citizens, he never neglected to assist them whenever he enjoyed the opportunity. Ladislao, whose affairs prospered amidst the divisions of the church, which supported Gregory, who had ceded to him many pontifical cities, liked not the ecclesiastical changes, nor the election of the new pontiff, which had taken place in Tuscany: he entertained darker and more daring views against the Florentine republic.

Since the death of the Duke of Milan, the Siennese had set themselves at liberty, and had appointed the

\* See Amm. lib. 16. We learn from history, that many of the bravest generals have begun in their early youth, either in earnest or joke, with the same profession. It is said that the celebrated Alexander Farnese, when a young man in Parma, accompanied by night by some bullies, arrested persons. The conqueror of France, Henry, King of England, so celebrated in the tragedies of Shakspeare, did the same when a young man, adding, (perhaps to make the action honest,) that he caused whatever he had taken away to be restored in the morning.

† Anmir. Famiglie Napoletane.

usual government with some modifications: these changes were so frequent in the state, that, without writing a particular history of that republic, it would not be convenient to detail them minutely: they entered into a peace and close friendship with the Florentines, perceiving that blind hatred towards them had been the cause of their losing their liberty, and exposed Tuscany to great danger. Instructed by experience, they suffered themselves not to be seduced by the flatteries of Ladislao, who, in order that he might conquer Tuscany, was endeavouring to induce them to accept his friendship. That king, being an able and fraudulent negotiator, attempted to deceive the Florentines, but after many useless negotiations with their ambassadors, of whom he asked the passage through Tuscany, and every thing being denied him with firmness, (since the little sincerity which guided him was but too manifest,) he marched against Tuscany.

The Florentines, having chosen Malatesta Malatesti for their captain-general, joining with the Siennese\*, made dispositions for defence. The Cardinal Legate of Bologna was also with them, who, at this time of division, exercised an absolute control over those countries which were committed to his government. The king approaching Sienna with 8 or 12,000 horse, and a proportionate number of infantry, and the attempts he made to separate the Siennese from the league with the Florentines proving useless, and not hoping, according to the imperfect art of war in those times, to take Sienna, after having laid waste the country, retired into the valley of Chiana (Valdichiana); whence scouring the district of Arezzo, which he endeavoured in vain to sur-

\* Pogg. lib. 4. Leon. Aret. Comin. Amm. lib. 16.

prise, and many other places belonging to the Florentines, he only made war upon the corn\*. Malatesta conducted a sufficient number of troops upon the Aretine territory to observe the enemy, and keep them in continual distress. The only enterprise he performed of any note, was making himself master of Cortona, of which Louis Casale was lord, by means of a secret intrigue with the people, who, rebelling, made a prisoner of Casale, together with Gianfigliuzzi, Commissary of the Florentines, and who had frequently warned Louis of the secret correspondence held by his enemies. The Florentine soldiers were either put to death or despoiled, and the city fell into the hands of the king†. The Florentine republic entered into an alliance with the principal enemy of Ladislao, Louis II. of Angiers, his rival in the kingdom of Naples, who was preparing to give him battle. The dispositions taken by the legate to invade La Marche, added to this news, caused Ladislao to retire towards Rome.

The Duke of Angiers came to Pisa, and being proclaimed by Pope Alexander King of Sicily and Jerusalem, and made Gonfaloniere of the church, he united the troops he had brought from Provence with those of the Florentines and of the pope, and this army marched with Malatesta towards Rome, without meeting with resistance. This city was divided into parties, adherent to the three who caused themselves to be called pontiffs; but the troops of Ladislao governed it under the shadow of authority from Gregory, commanded by the Count of Troja, since Ladislao himself had returned to Naples. Various attacks were made upon the city: the

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allies had taken possession of the papal palace, and Castel St. Angelo had surrendered to them; the remainder, however, defended themselves so vigorously, that the enterprise was thought impracticable, as the winter was approaching; the legate and the king, therefore, returned to Pisa, in order to concert more vigorous plans of war for the following campaign. Malatesta, however, remained near Rome, and began to hold secret treaties with the Romans, enemies of Ladislao. That part of Rome called the Borgo, had been occupied by the arms of the confederates, under the command of Orsino. The Count of Troja and the Colonnese thought this little troop might easily be destroyed: they attacked it, but were driven back with loss, which gave courage to the party of the new pope, whose name was loudly proclaimed, and Malatesta called into the city. He entered with the ensign of the lily, (*giglio*,) the arms of Gregory were thrown down, and almost all the pontifical cities followed the same party. Ladislao then perceived his error in making the republic his enemy, and sent Gabriel Brunnelleschi, a Florentine, and one of his courtiers, to try an accommodation; but the republic not wishing to enter  
<sup>1410.</sup> into it unless it became general with their allies, every hope of treaty vanished.

The whole of the confederates now stimulated the pope to repair to Rome; by the advice of his legate, however, he remained in Bologna. In vain the Romans themselves invited him, and brought him even the keys of the city. Obstinate to every invitation, he was taken ill in that city, where he finished his life, after a short, but virtuous, pontificate. The Cardinal Coscia was

Great endeavours were now made by the Duke of Angers: a naval armada came from Provence, which Ladislao thinking to resist, had entered into alliance with the Genoese, who had drawn themselves from the protection or control of France. Five ships were armed for his account in Genoa, which were commanded by Giustiniani, and came up with seven of the Provençal not far from the Pisan harbour (Porto Pisano). At the beginning, fortune was various, but the superior tactics of the Genoese finally triumphed over the Provençal: five of their large ships were taken, one sunk, and the other was alone saved\*.

King Louis, always favoured by the pope and the Florentines, arrived in Rome with a respectable army, commanded probably by the best generals of that age, such as Sforza, Braccio Montone, Paul Orsino, and others, and was received with every demonstration of favour†. King Ladislao, seeing the storm

which was gathering over him, made fresh and  
 1411. more successful attempts to make peace with the Florentines, who might have made the war more dangerous to him, by furnishing his rival with money, which he alone wanted. The Florentines, weary of so much expense (since the greater part of it fell upon them), were also desirous of peace, and concluded it, to the great mortification of King Louis. They consented to it the more willingly, as they made the valuable acquisition of Cortona, and other places, which the king ceded to them for 60,000 florins in gold. There were various other articles, but this was the most important. This was the most usual manner in which the Floren-



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tines made their conquests\*. King Louis having entered, with his army, the kingdom of Naples, a battle took place with Ladislao near Ponte Corvo, at Garigliano; the issue of which, although favourable to Louis, brought him no advantage, probably from the treachery of his generals, who, if they had followed up Ladislao, might have made him prisoner; Louis was therefore obliged to retreat, from want of money, and return to Provence. In a few years two expensive wars had been sustained by the Florentine republic. This heavy expenditure had occasioned debts, the weight of which was felt at present like debility after disease. The generality of the citizens thinking that wars were undertaken upon too frivolous pretences, a new council, called of the 200, was formed, to curb so dangerous a propensity. This number of citizens was to be taken from four polls of four quarters of the city, in which all those were included, who, from the year 1381, had belonged to the three greater trades, or were indeed eligible for them. The deliberations of the government were to be approved by this council, afterwards referred to that of the 131, composed of the principal persons actually in office; and finally to that of the commonalty. Thus obstacles to war were made greater, and the precipitate resolutions became arrested, which often either anger or expectations had given rise to, and various other provisions were proposed, in order to lessen the facility of engaging in new wars†.

The Florentines remained at peace, and were engaged only in little hostilities with the Genoese, who were not pleased to see Lerici and Sarzanello in their hands, pur-

chased by Buccicaldo. They moreover discovered their error in having favoured the purchase of Pisa, seeing that having no need of their maritime protection and of their port, the Florentine merchandise enjoyed a free and permanent course by means of Porto Pisano: under various pretexts, therefore, the Genoese gave annoyance to the Florentine navigation, being the more easily enabled to do so, as Leghorn was in their hands, which at that time they chose not to sell to the Florentines, and it became necessary for the latter to protect their commerce with good naval convoys. To put them a little to the blush, however, and enable them to keep the Genoese in some subjection, they obtained Porto Venere, upon the Ligurian coast, which the inhabitants willingly offered them\*. The republic was now at peace by land, but internal ills were fomenting, as usual, and the remains of the ancient fire, covered only with its ashes, began soon to be rekindled: some principles of conspiracy were discovered in those families of the condemned who had remained at Florence, and Bindaccio Alberti was beheaded, and all the individuals of this family, not excepting the children, were banished; Nanni Buondelmonte, convicted of attempting innovations, by exciting the common people to tumult, and George Asino, for secret correspondence held with the outlawed rebels, were put to death.

Although Pope John, for a considerable time, had been accustomed to affairs, to intrigues, and was  
<sup>1412.</sup> well versed in the art of knowing mankind, he was, nevertheless, far surpassed by King Ladislao. This man looked upon Rome, at all times, and the pontifical state, with an eager eye. He had been the friend and

\* Amm. lib. 6.

the favourite of Gregory when he had taken refuge in his states, and saw in Rome John, his enemy, who, wary and powerful, both in command of money and troops, would defend his states with energy : nevertheless, he succeeded, not only in deluding him, but

1413.

in availing himself even of his money for his ruin. In order that he might the better deceive him, he ordered an assembly of the ecclesiastics of his kingdom, who were to decide upon whom they should acknowledge as true pope : these being secretly directed by the king, were immediately agreed upon acknowledging John as such, and condemning Gregory, who had done so much for Ladislao, and was now at Gaeta. The king then intimated to him that his states could no longer be his asylum, and would probably have ordered him to be arrested, had he not hastily embarked. After a long sail he arrived at Rimini, where he was well received by the family Malatesta. This faction made Pope John believe that king had become his friend, and purchased from him peace with 60,000 florins of gold. But these operations served only as a veil, in order the better to delude him. He had already taken away from him various generals, and amongst the rest the celebrated Sforza. Whilst the pope was reposing in Rome upon the faith of the treaty, he heard that the troops of the king were marching to invade La Marche ; and taken on a sudden and disarmed, he had no other resource than flight ; and after going to Viterbo and Sienna, he finally turned towards Florence. The Florentines, dreading the anger of the king, hesitated in receiving him : he was obliged to wait without the city, nor was he admitted till three months afterwards. The army of Ladislao, led on by Tartaglia, entered Rome, and afterwards the king himself, who remained only a few

days. Rarely have men been found capable of deceiving with so much effrontery. At the entrance of the troops, the Florentine merchants who were in Rome, although their nation was a friend of Ladislao, fearing the consequences of the first tumult, secured their effects by concealment; but the king caused them to be assured, upon his word of honour, no seizure would be made of them, which they believed, returned to their occupations, and were completely despoiled\*. This was a kind of declaration of war. The Florentines in vain sought means of reconciliation between him and the pope; that king was most adept in setting treaties on the tapis, in prolonging and breaking them at his option. These having been fruitless, the pope left Florence, in search of assistance from Sigismond, King of Hungary and Bohemia, and who had also the title of King of the Romans. He had an interview with him in the city of Lodi: amongst the other important matters, as the christian world was always divided by three popes, John, in order to shew his zeal in removing the schism, agreed that a council should be held, and the city of Constance was fixed upon for that purpose†.

The Florentines, in the mean time, were in great apprehension from a king of such character, who threatened to swallow up Italy, and who valued nothing less than conventions, promises, and oaths. New treaties were made, wherein, although fear made them of one accord, it was conjectured by the wise, that the peace would not be stable, and certainly it was not honourable, as the Florentines were obliged to abandon the pontiff.

\* Pogg. Ist. lib. 4, avails himself of the following words:  
*Scelestum facinus non solum nomine regis indignum,  
 Sed pirate etiam nequissimum.*

† Leonard. Bruni Comment.

Strong opposition was made in the council of the 200, where, after various debates and ballotings, the party prevailed almost by violence, and by the influence of Maso degli Albizzi, who was at that time gonfaloniere\*.

The king, who had views upon the empire of all Italy, had no other intention than to put them to sleep, in order more securely to occupy the remainder of the pontifical state. The Florentine republic, immersed in a dangerous lethargy, left her ancient ally to be oppressed, and was sleeping by the side of a precipice, when death, who had been always her friend, who had saved her from Castruccio, from the archbishop, and from the Duke of Milan, now protected her from Ladislao. In the vigour of age, in the month of August, he was surprised by death, the consequence, in all probability, of the irregular life he led †. He was the most formidable enemy,

\* Istor. Fior. Anon. Rer. Ital. Scrip. tom. 19.

† See Neapolitan journals (Rer. Ital. tom. 21.) It is related by the historians of that time, that his death was occasioned by an evil given him by a harlot of Perugia. Tormented with severe pains, he caused himself to be carried from Narni to S. Paolo without the walls, and thence, by sea, to Gaeta and Naples, where he died. In the midst of the agonies of death he mentioned only Florence, and invited the standers by to that enterprise. Pogg. lib. 4. Giannone Ist. lib. 24. c. 8. relates the cause of his death, with some variety, that has all the air of fable; that making love to the daughter of a physician of Perugia, the latter, corrupted by the gold of the Florentines, and preferring gain to the life of his daughter, composed a venomous ointment, with which he could poison the sources of life and pleasure, making the daughter believe that it would produce such an effect as to make the king for ever enamoured with her. In our great improvements in modern chemistry, we know of no ointment capable of producing that effect, and it is difficult to suppose that it was known to the Perugian physician. The case, however, of Ladislao is singular, since it has all the symptoms of Lues Venerea, then unknown. Ammirato in the life of Ladislao asserts that poison to have been the juice of Aconite.

probably, of the Duke of Milan, who although well master of all the arts of cunning, fought nevertheless with his generals: this man fought with equal success both by stratagem and arms, passing for a brave warrior without faith, without religion, ready to sacrifice alike friends and foes to his own interests\*. He died without children, and his sister Jane inherited his estates†. She was called Jane II., evinced a pacific disposition, and therefore restored the powers of Italy to a calm, and particularly the Florentines, to whom she sent ambassadors.

The council of Constance was fatal to Pope John XXIII.; an extraordinary number of cardinals, bishops, and prelates, formed this sacred assembly, which was further honoured by the presence of King Sigismund: Angiolo Corrarario and Peter Luna were also summoned, but refused to attend. The same John XXIII., who presided, promised to lay down the pontificate if the other two would do the same; but these conditions, not giving satisfaction, he was induced by the council, after repeated solicitations, to make a promise of abandoning the pontificate entirely, if the advantage of the church demanded it. A pope, who has reigned some years, always finds many enemies; and various crimes, either true or false, are laid to his charge. Perceiving that the tempest was forming against him, he waited not for the issue, and suddenly fled amongst the Swiss, protected by Frederic, Duke of Austria, who, however, forced by arms, and the public remonstrances,

\* Pogg. lib. 4. Leonard. Bruni Comm.

† She had been married to William, son of Leopold III., Duke of Austria; being a widow without children, she returned to the paternal house.

ordered him to be brought back to the council where the decree of his condemnation and deposition was finally pronounced. The same took place towards the other two popes : Angelo Corrario obeyed likewise: the inflexible Peter Luna alone obstinately refused. Prayers were of no avail, nor even the threats of the two kings Sigismond and Ferdinand; having deluded even the troops, and flying from Perpignano to Colliure, and thence to Paniscola his castle, a very strong place in the kingdom of Valencia upon the sea, he maintained his proposition until his death, which happened in his ninetieth year, and left even behind him a trace of the schism. Two of his cardinals elected a new pope, namely, Egidio Mugnos, who was bold enough to create cardinals, and exercise the pontifical offices. The council, however, having deposed the three rivals, proceeded to the election of Martin V., of the house of Colonna.

At this time Maso Albizzi died in his seventieth  
<sup>1417.</sup> year, who was looked upon as the first person of the government of Florence; he had passed through strange vicissitudes; in his youth he had seen his uncle lose his head under the axe, his houses burnt, and his family exiled. He had the good fortune, however, to see the enemies' faction overthrown, obtain the first honours of the state, together with the principal share in the government of his country, and left his power and greatness to his sons\*, as it were by inheritance.

<sup>1418.</sup> Pope Martin V. had shown every good disposition towards the Florentines, and was invited by them to Florence, as his own state was continually exposed to tumults and vacillating, and having accepted the invitation, great preparations were made to receive

him. The pope was received with distinguished honours by all the Princes of Lombardy, and coming to Florence by the road of the Romagna, was met at Castrocaro by eight of the most respectable citizens, and afterwards by the first magistrates at the gate, who accompanied him with the greatest pomp and splendour to Santa Maria Novella, where his lodging had been provided for him\*. Here he had the satisfaction to see the already degraded Coscia come to acknowledge him, who, either escaping from the prisons of Germany, or freed by the money of the Florentines†, might have given him fresh inquietude. The pope again created him cardinal,  
 1420. but he survived but a short time, and died peaceably in Florence, honoured with all the magnificent funeral obsequies due to a pontiff. The post he had occupied, the important affairs he had managed, made the vulgar believe that he possessed considerable concealed treasures; and as John of the Medicis was amongst the executors of his testament, from whom the extraordinary riches possessed by this house took its rise, there were persons who thought the family had been enriched by the treasures of Coscia‡; but the riches of John,

\* Ist. Fior. Anonimi Rer. Ital. scrip. t. 19. Many minute circumstances are described, the functions performed by him, the present of eatables made to him by the government, &c.

† See following note.

‡ Ammirato has victoriously confuted this popular opinion, by quoting the testament. Ist. Fior. lib. 18. John was not the only testamentary executor, but with three others, Valori, Uzzano and Guadagni. He left only 20,000 florins, and as he disposed of 15,000 in favour of his two nephews, and of 5,000 in pious legacies, uncertain if the sum would be sufficient to fulfil his will, he ordered that, first of all, his legacies should be paid. Filelfo, whose extravagant and slanderous character is very well known, although benefited by the family of Medici, has invented this calumny with many others



like those of Cosmo, were derived from commerce. The pope made a present to the Florentines of a rose of gold, and declared Florence an archiepiscopal seat; and in order to reconcile the pope with their friend Braccio Fortebraccio, the Florentines called him also to Florence.

This leader, the most celebrated man of his age, of an illustrious family, Lord of Montone\*, was born in Perugia, of which he became master by his valour, as of many other pontifical cities. An enemy of the popes, he had entered triumphant into Rome, and had frequently defeated the first pontifical leaders, Sforza and Tartaglia. He came with all military pomp. He entered Florence with four hundred chosen warriors, amongst whom were his first officers distinguished by the splendour and richness of their accoutrements, and still more by the fame of their enterprises: the principal gentlemen, too, of the city he governed, accompanied him: his aspect, adorned with all the vigour and the air of a warrior, the honourable scars with which he was marked, impressed the spectators with veneration. With this retinue he arrived at the

against it. These are found in a manuscript of the Magliabecchian library, left imperfect, which contains various tracts "1. de Exiliò. 2. de Infamia. 3. de Paupertate. 4. de Servitute. 5. de Contemptu. 6. de Intempestivâ Senectute. 7. de Ægrotatione. 8. de Carcere. 9. de Morte. 10. de Miseriâ." The three first alone are written; of the others we have only the title. Instead of the Medicis enriching themselves by the inheritance of Coscia, he probably was powerfully assisted by their money. After his condemnation, he fled again; but being arrested, he freed himself from the hands of the Duke of Bavaria by ransom: 28,500 florins were ordered to be paid to the same duke by the Florentines, and particularly by John of the Medicis.

\* Vanity and adulation have had the ridiculous impudence to offer a conjecture, that the family Braccina comes from Barchina the Carthaginian. Joan. Compagni, Vita Bracchii.

habitation of the pontiff, kissing whose hand and foot, he made an eloquent defence of his actions. The pontiff replied to him with a dignified brevity. Guido da Montefeltro was also invited there at the same time by the Florentines, and made peace with Braccio. His sojourn was one continual festival: rarely have the Florentines shewn such great honours to sovereigns. Braccio, too, was amused by the city with warlike games. The tilting sports, in which the citizens joined, were so animated, that no less than 6,000 lances were broken. The pomp, the sights which were prepared, the celebrity this leader enjoyed, excited in the people so high an idea of him, that his rival the pope was entirely eclipsed, and the Florentine people, easy enough to pass from admiration to contempt, no longer cared for the prince of the church; and either already annoyed by his stay, or seeing him too near them, and for too considerable a time, lost all respect for him. Ballads were made and sung in praise of Braccio, and others in contempt of the pope, the latter of which continually sounding low and plebeian in the mouths of the mob, made his mind sore, and he preserved a bitter remembrance of it for a considerable time\*. He departed, accompanied as honourably as he had arrived, but, although he departed in anger with the Florentines, he preserved a high esteem

\* The boys of the street went singing: "Pope Martin is not worth a farthing."—(Papa Martino—non vale un quattrino, &c.). See Leonard. Aret. Comment., where we discover at once, that the pope gave vent to his passion at the insult offered him by the Florentines, in the presence of this learned man, with whom he was familiar, and the trouble that Leonardo gave himself to appease him. "*Ambulabat ille de Bibliotheca ad fenestram quæ hortos respicit, cum aliquot spatia tacitus confecisset deflexit, e vestigio iter a me quumque proxime se admovisset porrecta in me vultu, brachiaque molliter elato Martinus inquit Papa quadrantem non valet? Atque ego, &c.*"

for the house of Medicis, and chose to give them proofs of it, by creating, in 1422, John and all his descendants, Counts of Monteverde, in the diocese of Fermo, a little honour for such great citizens of so powerful a republic, and which has therefore never been mentioned amongst their titles\*.

At this time Gino Capponi died, a man whose memory is worthy of the highest honours. He had served his country in various and very useful enterprises, but particularly in the important acquisition of Pisa.<sup>1421.</sup> Although the offices he held, and particularly the management of the purchase, and the war of Pisa, might have enriched him, he died in an honourable poverty. A lover of his country, without being the slave of factions, he served it with so much fidelity, that, probably more by way of energy of expression, than from true sentiment, amongst the records left to his son, he asserted that the service of the same ought to be preferred, even to the *soul* †, although he would not say to life. Every honest man ought to give this sense to that expression, if indeed it is to be understood otherwise, perhaps this good man knew that, in political affairs, in the midst of so many duplicities, where every one avails himself of the most refined art to deceive another, he who acts honestly is always the laughing-stock of his enemies, and that a good citizen may delude by stratagem, and avail himself of the same means which his adversaries employ, namely, fraud;—a doctrine pernicious to morality, but too much justified by brilliant examples. Amongst the latter, Aristides the Grecian, surnamed the Just, is worthy of

\* The diploma is mentioned at length by Fabb. Nota 14.—Vita Cosmi.

† Records of Gino Capponi Rer. Ital. Scrip. tom. 18.

being mentioned, who, faithful as he was in his private interests, to the most rigid dictates of honesty, thought he might still swerve somewhat from them in favour of his country\*. Gino wrote the rebellion of the *Ciampi*, and the commentaries† upon the siege of Pisa; writings which, in the midst of a rude simplicity of style, discover the truth with which he adhered to facts, and the ingenuousness which formed his character. He left three sons, of whom Neri inherited his talents, probity, and the public esteem.

The conquest of Pisa had given great glory to the Florentine republic, and the peace of not a few years succeeding the war against the King of Naples, increased her riches and commerce. The little piratical hostilities begun between the Florentines and Genoese, had been soon terminated by reciprocal restitutions, and the Florentines had finally made a very valuable acquisition, which secured the possession of Pisa, namely the purchase of Leghorn from the Genoese, for the price of 100,000 florins in gold. This port, so near to Porto Pisano, in the hands of their rivals, became, in time of war, an asylum for corsairs, and a post, whence the enemy might choose any opportune moment to run down upon the ships which went in or came out of Porto Pisano. The Genoese, too, were easily induced to the sale, as they saw, after the conquest of Pisa, the impossibility of long keeping Leghorn. Having made these acquisitions, the Florentines turned their attention more to maritime affairs; they established the magistracy of consuls by sea, to whom they committed the building of

\* Plutar. Vita d' Aris.

† Ammirato attributes these commentaries to his son Neri, but perhaps confuses them with the other commentaries which contain the events of his times.

two large transports, and six light galleys of convoy, and the establishment of an arsenal. In spite of these provisions, and others they made afterwards, the marine of the republic was always small and weak. Wishing afterwards, however, to extend their connexions in Asia and Africa, they deputed Charles Federighi and Felice Brancacci, as ambassadors to the Soldan of Egypt, who were received with kindness and obtained those privileges which could secure to them their commerce in those parts, a commerce which was, at this time, so prosperous on every side, that with the exception of

<sup>1422.</sup> Venice, Florence was considered as the richest city in Europe. Every useful art flourished, and no less than two millions of florins in gold, in effective money, circulated at that time in Florence\*.

Peace, however, which had been the cause of this prosperity, was threatened by revolutions, which broke out on every side of Italy, and of which it is necessary to give a short account. Jane, Queen of Naples, succeeding in the kingdom to her brother, had suffered herself to be governed by Pandolfello Alopo : this man was of an obscure origin, but a very fine young man, in the flower of his age, and held every influence over a woman who had passed her fortieth year, and who left to him the direction of the principal affairs of her kingdom. The subjects loved the queen, and wished that she would choose herself a husband, not despairing of a succession which would secure the future tranquillity, and in the mean time curb the insolence of favourites. After many deliberations, it was resolved upon inviting James de la

\* Giving this sum the value of that time, it amounts to about fourteen, or at least twelve, millions of sequins, a sum which will scarcely be found in London at present.

Marche, of the royal house of France, to be the royal bridegroom, who, accepting the invitation, came with all haste to Naples. It was agreed that he should not take upon himself the title of king, but of Duke of Calabria and governor of the kingdom. Hardly was he arrived, however, when, taking advantage of the first moments of conjugal tenderness, the queen, with her own voice, proclaimed him aloud, king, before the whole court \*. With little sense of gratitude to his benefactress, the new king deprived her of every authority, by removing from their employments the most affectionate servants of the queen, and substituting Frenchmen. Pandolfello soon perceived the instability of a too rapid fortune, and how dangerous is the favour of queens, by being publicly beheaded: The king, dreading the affection his subjects bore towards their ancient mistress, held her in a kind of imprisonment, and they had frequently given signs of their impatience in not being permitted to visit her. Finally, liberty being granted her to go to dinner in the garden of a Florentine merchant, and this being known to the people and her favourites, they hastened there in crowds, and in tumult, and the city rising in her favour, King James was obliged to take shelter in the castle of the Egg (Castel dell' Uovo), whence he was only let out under an agreement to observe the conditions established before the matrimony, preserving the title of king, together with a large appendage. The queen resumed her authority and her inclinations: Ser Giovanni Caracciolo succeeded to the favour enjoyed by the unfortunate Pandolfello: he, too, was a very fine young man, and governed the affairs of the queen. The king, no longer able to suffer a country where, instead of a kingdom, he had only acquired dis-

\* Gior. Napolet. Rer. Ital. tom. 21.

honour, suddenly embarked, and returning to France, tired of the world, put on the habit of a Franciscan friar, and in this order died\*.

The kingdom of Naples remained in that disorder which the instability attendant upon a woman's government, the capricious conduct of favourites, and the  
1423. want of a legitimate heir, are wont to produce. John, who was afterwards grand marshal, dreaded only the power of Sforza, and, causing him to be sent against Braccio to free the state of the pope, left him afterwards without succour and without money; whereby this ferocious man, fit for any daring design, perceiving he was sacrificed by his mistress and favourite, conspired the ruin of both. Pope Martin, seeing himself also deluded, accorded with Sforza; and Louis III., Duke of Angers, and Count of Provence, was by both invited to the acquisition of the kingdom of Naples, who had inherited rights to it from his ancestors: Louis did not want long entreaties, but promised to come to Naples with a powerful naval force.

Sforza, in the mean time, having received money from him, advancing into the kingdom with his troops, caused the Duke of Angers to be proclaimed, and sent the baton back to the queen, with the insignia of great constable. The queen and her counsellor Caracciolo, perceiving that this enterprise was favoured by the pope, and that all the discontented would unite with the Angers faction, took the step of calling a warlike youth, Alphonso, King of Arragon and Sicily, and of Sardinia, offering him the title of Duke of Calabria, and the adoption as son of Jane. He accepted the invitation. The Duke of Angers was the first to arrive with his fleet in

\* Costanz. Ist. de Nap. lib. 13.

the port of Naples, which Sforza held in siege. The people of Angers united with the troops of Sforza, and the siege was still farther pushed ; but the fleet of Alfonso arriving on a sudden, made him abandon it after the Duke of Angers and Sforza had in vain endeavoured to prevent the disembarkation of the Catalans. Naples was freed, and Alphonso acknowledged as adopted son by Jane ; but the kingdom remained full of inquietude. Great disputes soon arose between the adopted son, the mother, and her lover, Caracciolo, who, by placing Sforza in disgrace, had deprived her of a great support, and was probably the cause of these misunderstandings. He wished to exercise the highest power in name of the queen : Alphonso was not of a character to suffer this ; and the contest between a lover and an adopted son is unequal.

Alphonso, seeing the mind of the queen alienated from him, endeavoured to occupy that kingdom by force : he suddenly arrested Caracciolo, and was about to do the same to the queen, who was in the castle of Capuana ; which, if he had succeeded in, the blow was struck, because he would have sent them into Spain, and his troops and his valour would have finished the rest. Jane, being advised of this, shut herself up betimes in the castle ; and, having arranged a treaty with the Duke of Angers and Sforza, declared the latter her general, and the former her adopted son, depriving Alphonso of the right of succeeding her, on account of the ingratitude he had shewn towards her. After a few very sanguinary actions between Alphonso and Sforza, attended with various success, in which, however, Alphonso remained Lord of Naples, the latter being obliged to return, on account of his affairs, into Spain, left to the protection of Naples his



younger brother\*, and having embarked, arrived at Leghorn. The Florentines had promised him 1,500 infantry, to attack Genoa, but not finding them ready he continued his voyage, and, in passing with his fleet before Marseilles, he bore down unexpectedly upon it, took all the ships that were in the port, sacked the city, not sparing even the churches, and having set fire to it, departed loaded with booty. This useless ally probably increased the enemies of the Florentines, Queen Jane, too, having joined the league of the pope and Duke of Milan. Braccio, during the contests between the son and the daughter, appeared to have espoused the interests of the latter, but, in fact, he only followed his own: he was besieging the city of Aquila which had followed the Angers party, and he prosecuted the siege, too, even after the last vicissitudes, wishing to add it to his own and private conquests. Being bravely surrounded,  
 1424. and the defence of it being of importance to the queen and the pope, (since upon the conquest of it Braccio might molest the pope, his ancient enemy,) Sforza was ordered to march to its succour: he willingly accepted the invitation, being an ancient rival of Braccio in the same profession. Hastening to the enterprise, he made a part of his army pass almost by force the river Pescara, which was swollen by the rains and the rise of the sea, the remainder of his army not following him. Whilst, impatient of delay, he was repassing the river, in order to hasten them on, his horse fell; and, being borne down by the weight of his arms, he was drowned,

\* We must believe that Carracciolo was very able in the art of intrigue, since he found the means of freeing himself from the hands of Alphonso his great enemy, and his mediator was Sforza, another great enemy. He was exchanged with many barons made prisoners in battle by Sforza.

nor could his body be found. His rival survived him not long: whilst he was persisting in the siege of Aquila, he was attacked by the army of Jane, in which was Francis, the son of Sforza, and being defeated in a desperate sortie, made by the Aquilans, he was taken prisoner, badly wounded, and shortly after died of his wounds.

Thus almost at the same time, the two most celebrated leaders of the age terminated their career. Highly distinguished for great talents and great vices, they had been in their youth friends and fellow-warriors: jealousy had made them rivals, and they acquired fame and states by their courage. Braccio was descended from an illustrious family; Sforza, born humbly, owed every thing to his valour. More sensible to interest than the love of glory, they were ready to fight either for or against whatever party offered them the greatest reward. A greater sense of honour, however, is visible in the actions of Sforza, whilst Braccio, when princes or republics no longer offered, whom he could serve, openly became head of a banditti, attacking, pillaging, and laying under contribution alike both neutral and friendly countries. Sforza left a son, who surpassed him in celebrity, and established the glory of his family.

Lombardy had not been less exposed to revolutions at this time, divided as she was between the two sons of the duke, and still more agitated by his leaders, now rather lords than dependants. The elder son, Francis Maria, ignorant of the arts of government, of an avaricious and cruel disposition, had incurred the public execration on account of these vices: it was, therefore, an easy matter for some of the principal families to carry a conspiracy into execution against him, and profiting of the absence from Milan of Facino Cane, who was

one of his bravest defenders, Francis Maria was slain whilst he was listening to mass, and Astorre Visconti, natural son of Bernabo, proclaimed duke. At the same time Facino Cane died in Pavia. Philip Visconti was living there more as a prisoner of Facino than as prince. His name and his rights would have introduced him to the government of the brother, and the soldiers of Facino were ready to march; Philip, however, wanted the means, namely money. It was proposed to him to marry Beatrice of Tenda, the widow of Facino; she made a present to her consort of a large sum of money: the soldiers, encouraged by this, marched to Milan, where Philip was received as duke; and Astorre, in taking shelter at Monza, was put to death there\*. This new Lord of Milan, who, without possessing the talents of his father, was heir to all his cruelties†, lust of gold and dissimulation, not only established himself firmly at Milan, but his arms were prosperous every where, as long as he availed himself of the courage and counsel of Carmagnola, a soldier educated under the discipline of Facino Cane, and one of the most illustrious generals of his age. A considerable part of the estates of his father came under his dominion, and, having finally occupied Genoa, he looked forward to aggrandizement also on the side of Tuscany. The pope had secretly allied himself with him, and perhaps the ridicule in which he was treated by the Florentines contributed

\* Muratori relates having seen his body uncorrupted, in Monza, in the year 1698.

† He owed all to his wife, Beatrix Tenda, widow of Facino Cane. Under the pretext of her having carried on an illicit commerce with a domestic, he caused her to be imprisoned, put to torments, and afterwards, to death: probably, she had no other crime, than the great disparity of age.

thereto. The duke, in an artful embassy, had solicited peace and friendship from the Florentines, since, after the death of his father, the peace had indeed secretly followed, without any convention being stipulated. In order the better to lull the Florentines to sleep, he wished solemnly to make this useless peace; various were the opinions of the governors: the peace party finally prevailed, and the duke promised not to interfere in the events on this side of the Apennines, the Magra, and the Panaro. By this treaty he looked forward to get a more certain possession of Genoa, which was easy for him to effect amidst the intestine discords which prevailed in that city; but when he least thought it, the Florentines got information that the duke had suddenly taken the occupation of Forli from the child Alidossi, who was under his protection, and which was brought about in the following fraudulent manner.

Alidossi was neutral in this war, and was therefore no object of suspicion. One of his subjects explained to the captain of the duke the facility of making himself master of it, whilst the water of the ditches which surrounded it was frozen over. The blow succeeded, because it was unexpected; the Milanese people entered by scaling the walls, and made Alidossi prisoner, who was sent to Milan, and finished his days a Franciscan monk. The duke, besides having broken the contract, by passing the limits agreed upon, had also insulted the republic by occupying a city and imprisoning a personage of rank, who was under her guardianship, and it was known too, that after the capture of Genoa, his soldiers had shouted out *To Pisa, to Pisa*, without being either chastised or admonished\*. The remembrance of the power dis-

\* Neri Capp. Comm. Pogg. His. lib. 5.

played, and of the deeds performed, by the father, was awakened in the Florentines. Ambassadors were frequently and uselessly sent on both sides, because the duke or his ministers, many of whom were educated in the school of the father, were very well acquainted with the science of ambiguity of words, and of protracting treaties to an useless extent.

After various reciprocal complaints, the Florentines resolved upon war, and elected Charles Malatesta their captain; at the same time making an alliance with Alphonzo, King of Arragon; and sent, by hasty marches, towards Forli 10,000 men, horse and foot, under the command of Malatesta. Many captains of renown were with this army, such as Lodowic, Obizi, Nicholas Tolentino, Rinuccio Farnese. Malatesta began by surrounding Forli; Agnola Pergola, dreading its fall, and not indulging any hope of forcing the camp of the Florentines, attempted a diversion by attacking Zagonara: the loss of this castle was a trivial matter in comparison of the advantage to be gained by the capture of Forli: and it was the opinion of some generals, that they ought to persevere in the siege without giving themselves concern about any thing else; but the Florentine magistracy, the ten of war, chose to command the military operations from afar, and ordered succours to be sent to Zagonara. The army of Forli moved in a dark night, and was accompanied in its march by a torrent of rain. Both men and horses arrived, harassed by fatigue, in the morning in sight of the enemy, and before they could well form themselves, attacked them: the fresh troops of the duke received the wearied and the disordered with great valour, who were completely defeated with a few killed, and a great many made prisoners, amongst whom

was the captain-general, Charles Malatesta, with about 3,000 horse\*.

Loud complaints were made in Florence by the party who had disadvised the war: this party was very great, since, besides those who are always the enemies of the heads of governments, all are wont to be of the sentiment which events have justified. The mischief done was considered very considerable, nor would the danger have been less, if Agnolo Pergola, general of the duke, profiting of the terror and disorder into which the enemy was thrown, had pushed forward upon the Florentine territory; but he temporized and employed his forces around castles of little importance, and gave time to the Florentines to collect an army sufficient to oppose him. They took into their pay two captains, Oddo, son of Braccio, and Nicholas Piccinino, who, with four hundred lancers, remains of the army of Braccio, which had been already defeated, came into the service of the republic. They made new remonstrances to the pope, who, rejoicing to see the Florentines humbled, in bitter words and frivolous reasons, refused every aid, whilst he was secretly favouring the duke. The Florentines again advanced into La Romagna, recovered some castles, and the ten of war ordered the captains to turn their attention towards Faenza, whose lord, Guido Anthony Manfredi, had joined the duke. The captains disadvised this enterprise, as dangerous in the heart of winter; but the ten of war, forgetful of the last disgrace, and how difficult it is to command armies at a distance,

\* Neri Capp. Comm. Pogg. His. lib. 5. Leonard. Aret. Comm. The Florentines, subtle calculators, computed that the injury done by this defeat equalled a loss of 300,000 florins in gold, about a million and a half of sequins of our money. Amm. Ist. lib. 18.

obliged them to obey\*. The Florentines marched, and entering the valley of Lamone (val de Lamone), fell into the snares laid for them by the enemy and the country people, and were again defeated, with the loss of Oddo and the imprisonment of Piccinino. The latter, however, was more obnoxious to the arms of the duke as a prisoner, than armed. Being brought to Faenza, he shewed Manfredi, its lord, how dangerous the alliance with the Duke of Milan was for him, ready as the opportunity afforded itself to him, of making himself master of his state, and how more secure was the friendship of the republic, under whose shade and protection, so many princes lived around it. The councils of Piccinino were strengthened by those of Charles, his uncle, Lord of Pesaro, and who was a prisoner of the Duke of Milan. The nephew, in paying him a visit, received the same consolation; became persuaded of it, and, abandoning the duke, devoted himself entirely to the Florentines, and was made, together with Piccinino, general of the Florentine forces. This acquisition compensated for the loss of the last battle; since Faenza, by attracting the attention of the enemy, proved the salvation of the Florentine state†.

By the alliance made with the King Alphonso, the republic found herself in a condition to molest the court of Genoa. The galleys of that king, commanded by the brother, with whom was Tregoso, approached Genoa to no advantage, but not so to Portofino, which was occupied. He had many partisans upon that coast, who, joining with the Florentines, scoured it freely, and exposed Genoa herself to danger: the duke sent a naval

\* Pogg. His. lib. 5. Leonard. Aret. Comm. Amm. Ist. lib. 19.

† Pogg. Ist. lib. 5. Amm. Ist. lib. 19.

force of eighteen galleys under Doria and a body of 5,000 infantry and three hundred horse commanded by Nicholas Terzo. The latter were defeated by the Florentines with the slaughter of 700 men, and 1,200 made prisoners.

But affairs were going on differently in Tuscany: the two armies had brought up towards Anghiari. Guido Torello had succeeded Agnolo Pergola: the latter had drawn the Florentine force into a snare, where they were defeated; and they afterwards received a new defeat near the Faggiola, which misfortunes were crowned with the loss of Piccinino, who, disgusted at the Florentines, went over with some generals from the service of the republic to that of the duke.

In these melancholy circumstances, the Florentines found no better measure than to direct themselves towards the Venetians. They shewed them the danger the Florentine republic was exposed to; that the ruin of the latter would so greatly aggrandize the Duke, that he would no longer find any opposition in Lombardy; and that it might be foreseen, he would not respect the Venetians more than he had done the Florentines, when he had the former only to contend with. The truth of these facts, made valid by the eloquence of Ridolph, the ambassador\*, was also strengthened by the counsels of Carmagnola, one of the greatest leaders of that age. He had served the duke faithfully and with success, but seeing himself neglected by the artifices of the courtiers, and even in danger, he had abandoned him: panting for revenge, and inspiring the Venetians with all the ardour of war, he ended by bringing them to that resolution, and they chose him commander of their troops.

\* Pogg. Hist. lib. 5.



Besides his military qualities, his long service, and the confidence he had enjoyed with the duke, made him privy to many secrets which might be of service in this war to the Venetian government. The Marquis Nicholas of Ferrara, was elected captain of the Florentines, who, with other Lombard princes, had entered the alliance. Carmagnola began the war against the duke with an important blow: favoured by the Guelphan party, and particularly by the family Avogadri, he entered Brescia, and occupied a part of it: and although the two citadels, with the remainder of the city, continued in the hands of the troops of the duke, and were for some time bravely defended, they were finally gained together with a considerable part of the Brescian territory\*. This loss, which announced a vigorous war in Lombardy, proved a great diversion in favour of the Florentines, since it obliged Philip to recall the troops which were in Romagna, and gave them leisure to send Nicholas Tolentino with 4,000 cavalry and 7,000 infantry into Lombardy to join Carmagnola.

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\* Pogg. Hist. lib. 5. Neri Capp. Comm. Amm. Ist. lib. 19,

## CHAPTER II.

BEGINNINGS OF THE POWER OF THE MEDICIS.—AUTHORITY OF JOHN.—PEACE OF THE DUKE OF MILAN WITH THE CONFEDERATES.—FORMATION OF THE TAX BOOK, CALLED THE CATASTO IN FLORENCE.—WAR IS RENEWED WITH THE DUKE OF MILAN.—PEACE.—DEATH OF JOHN OF THE HOUSE OF MEDICIS.—HIS QUALITIES.—VICISSITUDES OF LUCCA.—PICCININO.—DEFEAT OF THE FLORENTINES AND LIBERATION OF LUCCA.—CRUELITIES OF THE FLORENTINES TOWARDS THE PISANS.—VICTORY UPON THE PO OF THE DUKE OF MILAN OVER THE VENETIANS.—PEACE MADE BETWEEN THE DUKE OF MILAN WITH THE FLORENTINES AND THE ALLIES.—CONSPIRACIES AGAINST COSMO DE MEDICIS, WHO IS ARRESTED AND BANISHED TO VENICE.—COUNCIL IN BASLE.—FLIGHT OF THE POPE TO FLORENCE.—RECALL OF COSMO DE MEDICIS.—SENTENCE OF HIS ENEMIES TO EXILE.

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SEEDS of fresh discord began to show themselves in the Florentine republic. A strong party had been  
1426. raised against the war, and was become more daring after the first defeats: the expenses were very heavy, and murmurs consequently very loud. The government which had been accustomed to fix the manner of raising taxes, and probably not dividing them with justice, which rarely takes place where parties reign, had oppressed those individuals belonging to the faction opposed to it: the expenses in the mean time having increased, and those who held the reins of government not venturing to oppress the people too much, and wishing to avoid the odium of doing so, created twenty citizens, selected particularly from the

greater and lesser trades, and gave them the free power of fixing the imposts. In the performance of this duty, either by using a rigid justice they spared not those persons to whose authority they were wont to have respect, or by being irritated at the favourers of the war, and making the weight of the taxes fall more severely upon them; a bad humour was excited between them and the people, who appeared to have taken fresh courage upon this occasion; and there were families who had been once oppressed, who having risen anew could be easily encouraged to attempt innovations. After the great and the first citizens had resumed the reins of government, which were taken away from them by the Ciompi, abusing the victory they persecuted the moderate families only because they were favoured by the plebeians. His moderation, and the opposition he made to the insolence of his companions had availed Benedict Alberti nothing in the time of his power; nor his having refused to place himself at the head of the common people upon another dangerous occasion, any thing to Vieri de' Medicis; these and other families were humbled, some put to death, others banished, or deprived of enjoying public honours. The family of the Medicis suffering with firmness the injuries received from the government, attended diligently to commerce, whereby it increased in riches, the most valuable source in a commercial republic, whence authority and influence are derived.

John de Medicis, son of Averardo or Bicci, had arrived, by his opulence and wisdom, at the dignity of the first citizens; and may be considered as the founder of Medicean grandeur. He was not only employed in honourable embassies to the Venetians, to King Ladislao, to the Pontiff Martin V., but succeeded in 1422 to the high office of chief magistrate (gonfaloniere.)

The heads of the government became jealous of his increasing power, and the esteem and affection which the people bore him; and in order to consult upon the means best adapted to keep themselves in office, a congress was held in St. Stephen's of seventy of the principal citizens. Rinaldo Albizzi, who had inherited the maxims, and the authority of his father, by calling to remembrance the shameful government of the Ciompi, and the degradation of their order at that time, proved that the rabble were returning to acts of boldness, and that it was necessary to oppose the evil before it gained further strength. In order to bridle the pride and the power of the plebeians, he proposed that the number of bodies of the lesser trades should be diminished, and reduced from fourteen to seven. Nicholas Uzzano, however, although he agreed in a manner with Albizzi, thought the common people ought not to be irritated by depriving them of such an eminent prerogative at a time when there were powerful citizens, who might put themselves at the head of the former, and with the pretext of maintaining their rights, and taking vengeance for the injustice done them, ruin the present government. He gave them to understand, that before proceeding to so bold a step, it was necessary either to gain or to get rid of these heads. It was easy to understand that he wished to point out John de Medicis, who, to great riches gained in commerce, united the most consummate wisdom, and knowledge of the affairs of the republic, and who, abounding in moral virtues, was respected by the public. The succours too, which he imparted, with so generous an hand to the needy, whilst they had made him beloved by the common people, had rendered him the more suspected by the great, who dreaded that, under the veil of charity, he covered only dangerous

designs, and interpreted as ambition what was probably only goodness of heart, or at least prudence. The family of the Medicis had been always beloved by the common people, which gave these suspicions fresh strength: Silvester, by the favour of the plebeians, had ruined the authority of the captains of the party, whence afterwards the rebellion of the Ciompi; Vieri de' Medicis had wanted only the power, or the courage to do the same; and John, being now head of the family, was equal in wisdom to all his ancestors, and surpassed them far in riches. The faction of the great thought that they ought to bring John over to their party, and the care of doing so was intrusted to Albizzi, who, having sounded his disposition, received for answer that he saw not the necessity of diminishing the rights of the people; that rarely had the government enjoyed so much stability as at present; that Florence had been defamed particularly on account of the frequent changes in the state; that he was no lover of novelties, which were always dangerous; and that the only way to make themselves beloved and respected by the people at large, was that of acting in a manner that justice might be impartially exercised towards every rank of persons. These conferences were not unknown to the public, and being considered as an impotent attempt to oppress the people, had no other effect than to increase the hatred of the latter towards the great, and the authority of John\*.

In the mean time the Duke of Milan, seeing a city of so much importance as Brescia lost, two powerful republics, the Duke of Savoy, who shortly before had also joined the league, and many of the Lords of Lombardy against him, and the pope, who only assisted him

\* Macch. lib. 4. Ammir. lib. 19.

with plots, resolved upon making a peace, which was concluded in Venice by the mediation of the pope<sup>1427.</sup> by means of Cardinal Albergati, called Holy Cross, (Santa Croce), Rinaldo Albizzi and Marcellus Strozzi, who were sent there as ambassadors. Although the conditions produced not changes of great moment, they were, however, all against the interest of the duke\*; and amongst them is to be noted that the Florentines were to be freed from the obligation of transporting their merchandise to England or Flanders in Genoese vessels; which proves what we have already observed, that the Florentines never possessed a naval force correspondent with their commerce, even after the acquisition of Pisa and Leghorn; what their riches and power would have authorized, and their interest demanded them to obtain.

This war lasted only three years: it is true that the Florentines suffered a great loss of men; but the expenses were so heavy, that it becomes difficult to understand how they could have been incurred without squandering the public money, since they amounted to 2,000,000 and a half of florins in gold†. These great expenses, however, are a proof of the riches and power to which the Florentine republic had attained. The war, however, was not over. The Duke of Milan had probably no other intention, than to separate the Florentines from the Venetians, and to dissolve a league, the threads

\* Neri Capp. Comm. Pogg. Hist. lib. 5. Amm. Ist. lib. 19.

† By the value we have so frequently given to the money of those days, the sum corresponds to about 15,000,000 of sequins of our time. The public dilapidation is asserted by John Morelli, who, in relating these events, exclaims with indignation, "The Florentine republic cannot live in peace, if she does not think of cutting off, every year, the heads of four of her principal citizens, who, in order to magnify their power, encourage wars."

of which he hoped would not so easily be united again ; but the conditions of peace not being observed, as he was supported by the Milanese nobility themselves, who voluntarily offered to pay the necessary expenses, hostilities were had recourse to, and they began to impose fresh taxes in Florence, in regulating which, the justice and prudence displayed by John de Medicis, increased his popularity to the highest degree, particularly by the method introduced of the tax book (*Catasto* ;) to understand which operation, it becomes necessary to refer to times far back.

In the early times of the Florentine republic, when the state restricted in territory was not obliged by circumstances to enter into expensive wars and ambitious enterprises, the public expenses exceeded not the slender sum of 40,000 florins in gold, whilst the income amounted to 300,000, drawn from the various taxes; detailed at length by John Villani\*; whereby, if this system of economy had been maintained, the public treasury would have been continually increased: but the frequent wars, large subsidies to allied powers, the foreign troops which were maintained at the expense of the republic, augmented the national expenditure so considerably, that the 300,000 florins of gold not being sufficient, it became necessary to devise some extraordinary means of raising money. The community, not wishing to increase the tolls, duties and customs, which would have given a blow to industry, had recourse to loans from the citizens, in a manner too that they could not deny them, that is, forced loans by promising the interest of them and reimbursement of the capital from the taxes. As long as the loans were moderate, the cre-

\* Giov. Vill. lib. 11. cap. 91.

ditors might easily expect to be satisfied; but the debt continued to increase beyond measure, because the wants increased, and the citizens were constantly obliged to make new issues of money, which became prejudicial to commerce, by drawing from the hands of industrious people the sums which would have served to increase it. Nevertheless, every thing would have been tolerable, had a just method, proportioned to their substance, been resorted to in dividing the burthens: but instead of making a computation of the wealth of each person, and regulating themselves conformably, persons were arbitrarily taxed according to the opinion of the deputies. Even supposing these men to be honest and impartial, a great many errors and partialities must have taken place. The bold complaints, made by the aggrieved citizens in 1382, caused provisions to be taken adapted to prevent this arbitrary action. The city was divided into four quarters, and each of these into four districts (*Contrade or Gonfalonì.*) From every district were chosen four upright persons, who wrote down the names of those, whom they considered should be subjected to the loans: in every district, seven companies were formed, composed each of seven persons, called on that account the seven sevenths (*le sette Settime* :) every Settina planned the distribution of the sums upon the heads of the districts: these plans being sealed, were consigned to the friars, either of the angels, or of the abbey at Settimo, or others, who, after having examined them, struck out the two most grievous, and the two lightest, and from the three remaining, formed the proportionate sums which included the total amount to be paid by the district with the names of the persons, and the rate destined for them: the books, containing the descriptions of them, were then presented to the community.



This diligence, however, prevented not impartiality and injustice becoming intolerable. As the city was divided into factions, and the predominant one ruled the government, it is easy to see that the latter must have been spared: the rich and the powerful found the means of blinding the distributors of the burthens, and the less able class became intolerably taxed. To all which may be added that the administrators of the government pretended to an exemption, because they served their country with their persons and their counsel. The greater part of these being of the richer class of people, the principal weight, therefore, fell upon the less wealthy\*. Enmities between the citizens were continually becoming more bitter, and the constant hostile rivalships between the nobles and the plebeians, are, in great measure, attributed by the Florentine historians to this cause.

After various useless attempts, the power of John de Medicis finally succeeded in causing a juster method to be adopted of imposing the burthens by means of the *Catasto*. This operation was so called, from uniting, and as it were, heaping together (*accatastare*), all the wealth of the citizens, and therefrom proportioning the burthens. The decree, by which the *Catasto* is ordered, begins by exaggerating the evils produced by the methods till then followed, in so pathetic a tone as really to persuade us that injustice had arrived at its highest pitch †.

\* Piero Buon. Ist. lib. 4. Macch. lib. 4. Amm. lib. 19. Mich. Bruti Hist. lib. 2.

† The beginning is worthy of being read: "Quas, quot et quales onerum inæquabilitas publicorum cives suis bonis spoliavit, patria, privavit, substantiarum exterminium ad desperationem pæne perduxerit, desiderium multorum domum propriam repetere cupientium retraxerit, &c., non posset scriptura seu lingua referre. See in the decima, sez. 2. cap. 1, where the whole detail of the rules of the *Catasto* may be read.

By this act all possessors of property, whether merchants or artisans, were inscribed in a book : therein all their substance was noted, either fixed or moveable, which they possessed, either within or without the Florentine dominion, together with the goods, the money, the credit, the traffic of every kind, and upon the sum total of the property the proportioned burthens were established, condemning those capitals to confiscation which were secreted. The description of the goods was to be renewed every three years. This method, if not void of defects, had at least the advantage of being supported upon a secure basis, and therefore of preventing the odious exercise of despotic authority. The obstinate opposition made to this law by the principal and rich citizens, proves, that, by means of it, that partial favour was done away with, which they had hitherto enjoyed. All historians relate that it was gained from having been supported by John de Medicis, although, on account of his great riches, he was more liable than others to feel the great weight of it, which greatly increased the affection of the public towards him ; and the people were considerably relieved thereby, as well as the power of the great diminished. The former, who found themselves so much relieved, by exaggerating the irregularities hitherto practised, pretended that the accounts of the past burthens should be re-examined upon the new method, in order that they might be indemnified. But John de Medicis shewed them the danger, and the injustice of such a demand, and they became quiet. This act further heated the two parties, who were no longer concealed. Martini, chancellor of the signiory, was suspected of revealing the secrets of the state to the popular faction, and particularly to John. Uzzano caused him to be dismissed : but he was re-confirmed by John's influence ; although

shortly after, upon the death of the latter, he was again dismissed. Escaped from the danger of a civil war, the republic was now about to renew an active foreign one.

The duke of Milan repaired in person to the army, which had taken up a position in Cremona, in front of that of the confederacy which was endeavouring to get possession of the city. The two armies were very numerous for those times, since, added together, they amounted to 70,000 men, commanded by the most celebrated leaders. Carmagnola, with Michelotto, and Lorenzo, of Cotignola, were in the Venetian army, besides the Lords of Faenza, of Camerino, and of Mantua: in that of the Duke, Charles Malatesta was commander in chief, and with him were Agnolo Pergola, Nicholas Piccinino, the young Francis Sforza, and Guido Torello; none of them inferior, and some superior in capacity to Malatesta. Both sides came in contact with great animosity; the battle continued undecided from morning to evening, but all the military operations were made in great confusion from a thick dust arising, which prevented any distinction of friends from foes\*. Carmagnola himself, throwing himself from his horse, ran the risk of being taken, which would have been fatal to him, from the inveterate hatred the duke bore to him.

This battle had no further consequence than that of Carmagnola breaking up from Cremona; persuaded of not being able to occupy it, he repaired towards Castel Maggiore, and, molested in vain by the enemy, arrived there and took it; then turning himself towards the Brescian territory, the two armies found themselves again in front of each other: that of the duke, weakened from troops having

\* Amm. Ist. lib. 19. Pagg. Ist. lib. 6.

been sent elsewhere. Carmagnola sought battle, which Malatesta wished to avoid. The former having considered the situation of the field, and the manner of attacking the enemy, suddenly availed himself of an opportunity of a duel between two soldiers of each camp, which attracted the curiosity of a great crowd, and gave the most secret orders that the greater part of his troop should lay upon their arms: and, whilst the enemies' camp and many of his troops were viewing the warlike spectacle, he came down upon his confused enemy by an unexpected road. Agnolo Pergola was taken almost immediately. Francis Sforza, and Guido Torello, with their troops, were alone armed, who, being more diffident, blamed the too great security boasted of by the captain. They recovered Agnolo Pergola, made some head against the enemy for the protection of their army; 8,000, however\*, were taken prisoners, with all their baggage, artillery, ammunition, and the commander Malatesta himself. The duke received the news of this defeat at Mascali, on the 11th October, and was  
 1428. greatly panic-struck; and if Carmagnola, profiting of the confusion and terror struck into the enemy, had advanced without loss of time towards Milan, he would have placed the states of the duke in great jeopardy†; but either he had not the opportunity, or he wanted the wish, as was suspected, probably not wishing the total ruin of the duke, which gave rise to the first suspicions of his bad faith. The duke, therefore, saw himself obliged again to sue for peace, which was not unwelcome to the Florentines, the more so as their arms had not been successful towards Genoa; the expenses

\* Others say 10,000; 5,000 horse and 5,000 foot.

† Pogg. Hist. lib. 6. Amm. Ist. lib. 19.

had been very great, and the advantage was only on the side of the Venetians. It was easily concluded in April\* at Ferrara, by the same Cardinal Albergati: the conditions were nearly the same; the duke was obliged to cede Bergamo with the territory to the Venetians, and to restore the family of Carmagnola which he kept imprisoned together with the estates he had confiscated.

In the mean time, one of the principal citizens,  
 1429. John de Medicis, died in Florence. We have already seen the eminent qualities with which he was endowed, and the esteem he was held in by the public, which made him respected even by his enemies, who consisted only of those persons who dreaded and detested his virtues and immaculate conduct as a tacit reproach to their own ambition: they could, however, do him no injury, because he was too well protected by the public benevolence. He left his sons, Cosmo and Lorenzo immense riches, and to his family the reputation of being at once protector of the people and of justice. Before his death, he gave the wisest precepts to his sons, exhorting them to virtue and to follow, even in the midst of opulence, a modest plan of life, neither to avoid, nor to seek public employments, and not to be ambitious of popular favour. This discourse at the bed of death, when every worldly veil is removed, and illusions cease, made by a man of so much religious charity, confirms us in the opinion that his actions were governed by a love of country, and not by ambition†.

\* Pogg. Hist. lib. 6. Amm. Ist. lib. 19.

† Amm. Ist. lib. 19., attests, that not only in Macchiavello, but in many writings and documents far more ancient, the discourse of John is mentioned: we must pay little attention to the calumnies against John by Michael Bruto, an author who appears to have made it his object to abase the virtues of the family of the Medicis.

The generosity, the beneficence, displayed by John, are not denied by his enemies, who, unable to do any thing else, have maliciously pretended that they were only acts of hypocrisy, in order, thereby, to captivate the more the minds of the people. May Heaven grant that this were the only kind of hypocrisy; no authentic proofs, however, being adduced to substantiate this sinister interpretation, the accusation falls away into mere malignity. If this interpretation, however, persists, without proof, in deriving from a fountain less pure, what arose only from warm humanity and friendly benevolence, it may, at least, be called wisdom in a man, to have made himself acceptable and beloved by the people, who never could accuse him of any thing, although he lived in a tumultuous republic, in the midst of factions. The advantage which the popular government possesses, amidst so many disorders, is exactly that of constraining the citizens to public virtue, by making themselves beloved by the people. Whoever does so, without exciting tumults, without making himself master of the government, is praiseworthy, in any acceptance of the term, and such was John. He died at the age of seventy years: and although a private individual, such was the esteem the public held him in, that the funeral was not only accompanied by innumerable citizens, but by the ambassadors of the emperor, of the Venetians, and of all the other powers which were then in Florence. His two sons, Cosmo and Lorenzo, formed afterwards two families: that of the former terminated gloriously in the two pontiffs, Leo and Clement VII. From that of Lorenzo, Cosmo, the first Grand Duke of Tuscany, took his origin. Both the brothers inherited vast riches; but the authority and political influence in the republic, were the inheritance of Cosmo.

The wounds made in the minds of the great, by the tax-book, or *catasto*, were not yet properly healed. They tried every method of rendering it odious to the city, by procuring the law to be carried into effect with the greatest possible severity, and even cruelty; the discontent, moreover, increased, since the Volterrians refused, who were included in it, like the rest of the district of Florence, to be subject to it: they maintained it to be contrary to the conventions they held with the Florentines\*. In this dispute, which had arisen before the death of John, the reasons given by the Volterrians were supported by the house of Medicis, and, perhaps, through the influence of John, the first decision in Florence herself would have been made in their favour†: but this dispute being afterwards renewed, it was decided against them. Many of the first citizens of Volterra being ordered to Florence, after having opposed with firmness the pretensions of the Florentine government, were thrown into prison, and, by the tedious duration of this imprisonment, were finally obliged to sanction the *catasto*: they returned full of ill-will to Volterra, and gave rise to a rebellion against the Florentines. Guisto, one of those who had been imprisoned, was at the head of it; but having solicited succours in vain from Lucca, Sienna, and elsewhere, perceiving that the Florentines were preparing to use force against them, they put Guisto to death, and returned under their dominion‡.

The war with Lucca followed this movement. After she had regained her liberty, to establish which the Florentines contributed, she had been agitated by the

\* Cecin. Notiz. Istor. di Volterra, pag. 219.

† Cecin. pag. 220.

‡ Amm. Ist. lib. 19.

factions which divided almost all the Italian republics, in which those persons, who were most celebrated for genius, eloquence, and riches, endeavoured to domineer over the others, and place themselves at the head of the government. The family of Guinigi was one of the first; and Francis, one of the most respectable citizens, had warmly contributed to establish the free government. After his death, that family appearing too powerful, many of the first citizens united to humble it, and removed various persons belonging to it from the most important offices. Lazzero, however, son of Francis, soon regained his ancient ascendancy. A dangerous rivalry had arisen between the Guinigi on one side, and the Fortiguerri and the Rapondii on the other, to a degree, that, in the year 1392, they finally came to blows. The Guinigi remained conquerors, and Fortiguerri head of the faction, and the most powerful man in the city was put to death. Lazzero Guinigi remained head of the republic, which continued to be ruled under the influence of that family for a long time, and this prudent man governed it, until an end was put to his life by domestic treachery. Of all the race of the celebrated Castruccio Antelminelli, one girl alone remained, of the age of eight years, the rest of the family having been annihilated by a fatal epidemic, which raged in Lucca. Anthony Guinigi, brother of Lazzero, wished to marry her, and hoped to obtain her, as Lazzero was left tutor of the girl: but either the latter, on account of her tender age, would not consent, or whatever might be the motive, she fixed her nuptials with Paul, the youngest brother. Anthony, being irritated at this, and stimulated by Niccolaus Sbarro, a common brother-in-law, who, perhaps, made him entertain views upon the principality if Lazzero was removed, determined to



kill him\*. Both of them coming one evening to see him, whilst he was writing in his cabinet, put him to death, giving him many wounds, and, repairing to a place of security, in order that the family might suspect nothing, they hastened to call the people to arms. They were not only not attended to, but, being very soon taken, were consigned to the tribunals, condemned to death, and beheaded. Great funeral honours were paid to Lazzaro, and Paul, his brother, not only succeeded him in authority, but being assisted by the troops of the Duke of Milan, sent to him from Pisa, by the Governor John, of Nola, became, with the title of captain, Lord of Lucca. He governed it, however, with wisdom and justice, as far as these can be exercised amidst parties. The long period of thirty years, during which his dominion lasted, proves him, at least, to have been very fortunate; until, the intrigues of the Duke of Milan, and, through him, of Francis Sforza, which were encouraged by the Florentines, deprived him of the government. In the last war he had favoured the Duke of Milan, and his son had borne arms for him. The Florentines were exasperated against him; Nicholas Fortiguerra, son of Braccio, who had marched with the Florentine soldiers against the Volterrans, to recal them to their duty, was secretly encouraged, particularly by Rinaldo Albizzi, to make an inroad upon the Lucchese territory. The ambassador of the Lord of Lucca, com-

\* The death of Lazzaro is related differently. Buoninsegni and Ammirato say, that Anthony was instigated by the Duke of Milan promising him the Lordship of Lucca. Ser Giovanni Cambi, a very great friend of the house of Guinigi, passes over the fratricide in silence, and says that he died of pestilence. I have followed the manuscript annals of Beverini, who, although so much later, was able to consult authentic documents.

ing to Florence, is said, in secret to have animated the government to this enterprise, which had many favourers; some persons, however, as for instance, Uzzano, declaimed against it, by maintaining, that it was neither just, because the treaty was still recent, in which the Lord of Lucca was considered as an adherent of the Florentines; nor was it easy, since they ran the risk of kindling another war, in which the enemies of the republic would not cease in giving aid to the Lucchese: he spoke of the immense expenses incurred in the last war, and the necessity they would be under of incurring others: but the proposal being supported by Rinaldo Albizzi, and the party of the Medicis, and encouraged, probably, by national vanity, and the greediness of augmenting the dominion of the state, was gained. The Venetian government, too, irritated against the Lord of Lucca, on account of the son, in the last war, having taken up arms against them, instigated the Florentines to revenge, through the mouth of their Doge. From the information that had been given by Fortebraccio, that a gate was promised them to enter Lucca at, as well as from the advices received from the vicegerents of the Valdinievole, who declared the castles of the Lucchese ready to surrender to the Florentines, the enterprise was considered short and easy: and, in order to justify it, they sent Bernardo Guadagni ambassador to the pope, to explain the causes of complaint they had to make against the Lucchese sovereign\*.

The ten of the war were now created, Fortebraccio was appointed captain-general, and Astorre Gianni and Albizzi, commissaries†. As two factions reigned, the

\* The instructions are found expounded at length in the "*Riformazioni*," published by M. Fabbroni. Vita Cosmi, nota 19.

† Neri Capp. Comm. Pogg. Ist. lib. 6. Amm. Ist. lib. 19.

war was highly blamed by one part of the citizens, and commended by the other: whereby, the news received was always contradictory, and the operations not universally seconded. Gianni was accused of various crimes, and removed, and two new commissaries, besides Albizzi, Alamanno Salviati and Neri Capponi, were sent to the army. The councils of Neri, which had not been embraced in deliberating upon the enterprise, were not attended to either in the management of the war: considering the difficulty of conquering Lucca in the winter, he thought they should first wait to gain the castles, whilst the government wished the army to march to the walls of Lucca. Another chimerical project was in vain opposed also, which, if greedily embraced by the Florentines, they are worthy, at least, of some excuse, as the author of it was one of the most celebrated men of that time, Philip Brunnelleschi, who had so unfortunate a share in the execution of the enterprise. He had proposed to inundate Lucca, and thus oblige her to surrender. The fame this man enjoyed, the singularity of the project, gained him the support of the government and of the multitude, who are greedy at all times of novelty, and curious of the marvellous: the design was favoured by Albizzi, and censured, as impossible, by Neri Capponi. The ten rulers of the war ordered Brunnelleschi to go to the army, which was posted near Lucca, and better examine the enterprise upon the spot, which only served alike to confirm him in his own opinion, and Capponi in the contrary. The execution of the plan was decided upon; the project was to shut up the course of the Serchio, below Lucca, with a bank, through a ditch, which conducted into the Serchio the waters of the mills of Lucca, and force it to rise again through a new ditch, and inundate the city. But either Brunnel-

leschi judged only with his eye of the effects which were to be produced, as the art of levelling was not, at that time, brought to the necessary exactitude\*; either the Lucchese, by strong ramparts, which they constructed at the same time, prevented the waters from penetrating into the city, and which, thus forced back, by swelling and bearing upon the bank of the Florentines, broke it down; or the Lucchese, availed themselves of an opportunity, and crushed it by force. Instead of Lucca, therefore, the camp of the Florentines became inundated, and the latter were obliged to withdraw †. The enterprise having thus failed, every blame fell upon the authors, and, particularly, upon Brunnelleschi; for the public, always extreme, as well in praise as in blame, unmindful of the extraordinary merits of that man, of the great works he had performed, and particularly of the vast and majestic cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore, which attracted the admiration of the whole world, (whereby the republic herself acquired the highest glory, in the possession of a citizen of such renown, who was regarded, with reason, as the restorer of fine architecture,) loaded him with insult and ridicule‡, which embittered the last days of that great man.

\* We have seen the enormous mistake made by the learned, in reckoning for Castruccio, the declivity of the Arno from Florence to the Gonfolina.

† Gino. Capp. Comm. Amm. Ist. Fior. lib. 20. Pogg. Hist. lib. 6. Bevereni Annal. Lucen. Manuscr. lib. 10. The latter relates, that the work lasted about two months. A similar issue, in the fourth century of the christian æra, at the siege of Nisibis, a city of Mesopotamia, attended the project of Sapore, King of Persia, to inundate the city, by shutting up, below it, the bed of the river Migdonio, which traverses it. Julian. Orat. 1, 27.

‡ Ballads were made, and publicly sung against Brunnelleschi. Amm. lib. 20.

Although this misfortune was not the cause of the enterprise against Lucca being abandoned, it began to be still more difficult, because the Duke of Milan secretly assisted the Lucchese, and the Genoese and the Siennese taking umbrage at it, the Genoese finished, by forming an alliance with the Lucchese. Nicholas Piccinino, under various pretences, entered into the valley of the Taro, (Val di Taro,) and the Count Sforza went over to the pay of the Lucchese, with 3,000 horse and 1,500 foot, and entered with them into Tuscany : operations, which had their source in the secret manœuvres carried on by the Duke of Milan. But the Florentines, who fought with gold, gained Sforza over to them, and, under pretext that the Lord of Lucca wished to enter into an accommodation with them, by ceding the city, a conspiracy was framed, by which Guinigi was deposed, and imprisoned. He was a man of a mild disposition, and is praised for having alike risen to, and descended from, the first post, without effusion of blood. He was sent, with his son Ladislaus, to Milan, where he remained a prisoner two years, after which he died. His son, taking refuge at Genoa a few years afterwards, in vain endeavoured to regain the post filled by the father, and thus the power of that family terminated. Lucca, in the mean time, returned to liberty. The Florentines having declared they had entered into that war, in order to chastise the Lord of Lucca, it would have appeared that every motive for its continuance had now ceased ; and the Lucchese, in an embassy to Florence, entreated that, as the tyrant was removed, peace should be concluded with them : but the Florentines made use of that language, dictated by the discovery of broken faith, telling them that they were indeed ready to make peace, but that, having seen by experience, how little they un-

derstood the art of preserving themselves free, they wished for security: at which language, the ambassadors, perceiving what was the enemy's view, departed. But even if they had been of good faith, it was now no longer time to abandon the enterprise, after the Duke of Milan had interfered with it, who would have finished with making himself master of Lucca.

The Florentines, in the mean time, were every where held up to ridicule in face of the public, as deluded and contemned, after having spent so much money, employed every deceit, without having acquired Lucca, which on the contrary defended herself the more vigorously with the aid of the Genoese. The latter feigned to act in their own name, but were secretly instigated by the Duke of Milan, who held the signiory of Genoa with certain limitations. The Genoese gave money to the Lucchese, and having taken Piccinino into pay, added a 1,000 Genoese bowmen to his troops, and sent him against the Florentines\*, who were commanded by the Count of Urbino.

Thus, by degrees, the Florentines found themselves entangled in an expensive and difficult war, and verified the sage presages made by Uzzano and Capponi. Piccinino came to succour Lucca, and introduce into it supplies of people as well as of provisions, and the Florentines directed their attention to prevent him. The two armies were in front of each other in equal number, divided only by the Serchio. An affair took place in which the Florentines had the worst†, and, probably, discord between the captains Fortebraccio and the Count of Urbino had a share in it. The details given of that

\* Folietta Hist. Januen. lib. 10.

† Neri Capp. Comm. Pogg. lib. Amm. lib. 20.

defeat are various. A Lucchese writer relates that Fortebraccio, more skilled than the duke, thought it not opportune to fight, but that by sending a body of 2,000 men near the Treddana, a little river that falls into the Serchio near Lucca, to support the fortress of Montemagno, he would have been able to prevent the enemy passing the Serchio, intercept the provisions, or fight with advantage. His counsel being neglected, Piccinino arrived at the Serchio, which, however, from the rain that had fallen, inundated the plains. Piccinino, having observed that the waters were rapidly lowering, thought of fording them in the night; and having caused the Lucchese to be warned, to be ready upon their arms at the dawn of day, advancing in the night along the banks, far from the view of the enemy on the 3rd of December, when it was not quite day-light, he was the first, in order to give courage to his men, to push his horse into the river, which he passed easily, whilst the rest followed him. Having rested his troops, towards midday he advanced against the enemy, who expected him not, and being suddenly attacked on this side, and surprised in the rear by a troop of the Lucchese, who having opened their gates, courageously rushed to the onset, were easily beaten with great slaughter, and many prisoners: of the latter, the Florentine historians confess alone there were 1,500 cavalry, without mentioning the infantry. Almost the whole of the city were spectators of the battle from the walls, the towers, and the steeples; and when they were secure of the victory, the citizens ran even without the walls to meet, and kiss the hands of the conquerors. Piccinino entered the city triumphantly; his likeness was painted on horseback in one of the most frequented places; and it was decreed, that every year, on the 3rd of December, public bonfires, in

token of joy, should be made before it\*. The consequence of this defeat was the liberation of Lucca, and the loss of the district once acquired by the Florentines.

Seeing the war now certain with the duke, the only remedy was to interest the republic of Venice in it, to which Francis Tonnabuoni was sent as ambassador, asking at the same time speedy succours†. Piccinino scouring the Pisan territory occupied a considerable number of the most important castles. Pisa herself ran the risk of falling into the hands of the enemy, and the cruel manner in which she had been hitherto treated by the Florentines, was sufficient [to rouse her to rebellion. If we are to give credit to an historian of those times, the dread of this was the occasion of a cruel expedient being had recourse to, viz., that of ordaining that all Pisans from fifteen to sixty years should be expelled from the city. The Florentine Julian Archbishop of Pisa is made the author of the cruel execution, who by scouring the city, in arms, drove out the citizens, not permitting them even to carry with them their property. It cannot be denied that the Florentines did not exercise a very cruel empire over Pisa, and were anxious of withdrawing from her those citizens, who might still sigh for their ancient liberty; but the silence, both of the Pisan annals and of other respectable historians of the

\* Bever. Ann. Lucen. lib. 11. Amongst all the narrations given by various historians, this appears the most simple and true. Beverini relates that these fires were continued even at his time, that is, two hundred and fifty years after, and confutes Giovio, who says that an equestrian statue of bronze was decreed. Neri Capponi (Comm.) gives a detail very like that of Beverini, adding that the commissaries were sent in haste from Florence to warn the duke not to risk the battle, and that the same morning Fortebraccio wishing to indicate there was no remedy, told them "Your medicine arrives late for this patient."

† See the instructions. Fabb. Vita Cosm. note 22.



age, leaves, at least, the cruel execution in doubt\*.

<sup>1431.</sup> The Siennese, too, and the Lord of Piombino, united against the Florentines in aid of Lucca. Piccinino scoured, without any resistance, the country wherever it pleased him, occupied the Volterranean territory, extended himself afterwards into the Vale of Elsa, (*Val d' Elsa*,) and endeavouring in vain to get possession of Arezzo, was recalled into Lombardy, where the Venetians had renewed the war with the duke, which enabled the Florentines to take breath from the arms of so dangerous an enemy.

Carmagnola was captain of the Venetians, who in the late wars had so much distinguished himself. Nicholas Piccinino and the Count Francis Sforza, who was continually increasing in celebrity, served the Duke of Milan: coming in contact upon the Cremona territory, in a first action with Carmagnola, after an obstinate battle, the latter had the worst with the loss of five hundred horse†. But it was upon the Po particularly that the contest was carried on with vigour, where the two hostile fleets met, but the Venetian was superior to that of the duke. In the first day the Venetians remained conquerors, and took five galleons. The day following Sforza and Piccinino having made Carmagnola believe, by means of

\* This atrocious execution is not mentioned (that I know of) but by Andrea Belli or Biglia, a writer of that time, who describes it in the blackest colours: the other historians do not speak of it, and so notorious a deed could not have remained hidden. It remains to be seen, whether Biglia the Milanese, addicted to Visconti enemy of the Florentines, and panegyrist of John Galeazzo his father, deserves all credit. That his character was subject to animosity is attested by what he wrote against Bernardino of Sienna.

† Simonetta Vita Francis. Sfor. Rer. Ital. Scrip. t. 21. Sanut. Ist. Ven. Rer. Ital. t. 22.

false spies, that he was going to attack him by land, and keeping him on the watch on this side,\* and the vessels receiving reinforcements of troops, renewed the combat, which was continued for a considerable time without advantage to any party. The Genoese, who were in the duke's ships, perceived that the river, which was much swollen by the rains, was rapidly lowering, and foresaw that their ships, which were smaller and lighter, would soon have the advantage; which, indeed, happened. Many of the Venetian ships were stranded, others crippled and rendered incapable of fighting; the victory turned decisively in favour of the vessels of the duke, the defeat was complete, twenty-seven galleons were taken, and 8,000 men were made prisoners†.

The war, in the mean time, was carried on but slowly in Tuscany, between Lewis Colonna, captain of the duke, and Michael Cotignola of the Florentines. The Venetians partly took revenge by sea: their fleet, commanded by Lorredano, arrived at Porto Pisano, and, joining that of the Florentines, commanded by Paul Ruscellai, went out to meet the Genoese, and beat them near Porto Fino, capturing eight galleys‡. In this ren-

1432. contre, Raimondo Mannelli displayed his valour, who seeing that the issue of the battle would depend upon the combat between the two admirals' ships, Venetian and Genoese, which were engaged with the greatest warmth, and the Venetian, about to strike, boarded with his galley the Genoese, which was so much

\* It was doubted whether bad faith was not shown by Carmagnola.

† Cron. di. Bologna. Rer. Ital. 5. tom. 18. Simon. Life Fran. Sforg. The author of the chronology was present at the battle.

‡ Pogg. lib. 5. Amm. lib. 20. Buonin. Ist. Fior.

larger. The latter, reeling on one side, a great part of the crew fell into the sea, which decided the conflict\*. We have already seen that Carmagnola, in this new war, maintained not the celebrity of his name, and being suspected by the Venetians of not having chosen to do what probably from the various casualties of war, he was unable to effect, he was arrested, and after a short and secret process, in which he is said to have confessed his crimes, under torments, he was led with a bar upon his mouth to the square of St. Mark, where his head was taken off†. Probably he was guilty: but the public have always a right to term injustice any act which decides of the life and honour of a celebrated man without seeing proofs of his guilt, or, at least, must consider them as very doubtful; as no person who possesses understanding can discover any reasonable motive for concealing them. A proof of this may be found in the criminal system of the most polite nations, and particularly in that which, for so considerable a period, has formed the glory and personal security of the English people.

The Venetians, in the mean time, deprived of this leader, and without any one to supply his place, saw not their affairs going on better; they experienced a fresh defeat not less than the others, by Piccinino in the Valtellina, with the loss of 3,000 horse, and 4,000 infantry made prisoners, together with the commissary‡. The losses on both sides, being nearly equal, peace was treated

\* The sailors refused to attempt so desperate a blow. Raimond obliged the helmsman to it by threats, and by seizing an axe. In the house Mannelli there is a letter wherein the fact is described. Raimond was nephew of that Francis, great friend of Boccaccio, who in 1384 made the singular copy of the Decameron.

† Sanuto, Ist. Veneta, Cron. di Bologna.

‡ Sanuto, Ist. Ven.

rior, and concluded with the Venetians, the Florentines on one side, and the Duke of Milan on the other, and their respective allies with the mediation of Nicholas D' Este, Duke of Ferrara, matters remaining nearly as at the commencement of the war, the Florentines having spent a large sum of money without gaining Lucca.

Pope Martin had now been dead two years, who having preserved throughout his reign the remembrance of injuries he had received from the Florentines, had been their secret enemy, and rejoiced at their losses and humiliations. It was not only his glory to have put an end to the long schism, which prevailed, and unite the church, but he regained a great part of the states which had been lost to the holy see, and if we except his excessive partiality for his own family, he was, at once, a good pope and a wise sovereign. Condulmiero, the Venetian, had succeeded him, under the name of Eugene IV., a very great friend of the Florentines, honest in character, but inferior in political talents to Martin. Ambitious of being the pacificator of Italy, he sent ambassadors to various powers, but in vain. Sigismund, the emperor, coming almost at the same time into Italy to be crowned at Milan and Rome, stopping in Lombardy, received the crown of iron, and was treated splendidly by the duke; who, however, such was his extravagance, would never see him, and remained shut up in his castle. This stay and friendship with the duke made the emperor suspected by the pope and the Florentines: as he wished to come into Tuscany, the Florentines had been incited by the pope to oppose his passage, as he had not troops sufficient to open himself a road by force. He arrived at Lucca, and wrote an imperious letter to the Florentines, intimating to them to desist offering insults towards the Duke of Milan, and Lucca, and even to leave Pisa

free: it was necessary, however, in order to speak in this tone, to have a force far superior. The Florentines replied to him with moderation, but firmness, showing him that all the blame rested in the duke; that if he had not been in an enemy's country like Lucca, they would send him ambassadors to persuade him of their motives\*. The only loss they dreaded from this emperor, was a sequestration or confiscation of the goods of their merchants in the empire, and in Hungary; a reprisal, to which his authority was sufficient to induce the princes and barons, it being very easy to hasten to make a prey, and the smallest pretext sufficing for plunder. It appears that the emperor had attempted this blow; the

1433. Florentines, therefore, addressed a manifesto to the Princes of Germany and Hungary, showing them the wrongs done them by the emperor, and their justification; and had influence sufficient to prevent this kind of political suspension†. The Florentine army sacked the Lucchese territory in his face, and wished to besiege him in it; but so contradictory were the opinions entertained by the magistrates, that they opposed not even his passage of the Arno; which enabled him to go to Sienna. He was received in that city with

1434. magnificent pomp, met by the clergy and the first magistrates, who presented to him the keys, which he courteously refused, and replied they ought to remain rather in their own hands‡. Five hundred Hungarians, armed with bows, accompanied him as protectors of his person, and as many other soldiers with the gun, a kind

\* The letter is mentioned by Fabbroni Vita Cos. ; note 28.

† The original manifest is in the Life of Cosimo di M. Fabb. note 29.

‡ Petri Rossi Hist. Sen. Rer. Ital. tom. 20. Malev. St. di Sienna, l. 2. p. 3.

of weapon which began to appear in those times, although it had been invented many years before. He joined his troops with those of the Siennese, and carried on a more active war against the Florentines. He remained about nine months in Sienna, but having made peace, was enabled to go tranquilly to Rome, and receive the crown in that city from the Pontiff Eugene IV., whence he returned to Germany, and repaired to the council of Basle.

Peace being made abroad, the war of factions as usual must break out at home. After the death of John of the Medicis, Cosmo, his eldest son, became heir to his vast riches, and the paternal authority, with which he not only preserved, but increased his popularity. Citizens of talent, courage, fitted to direct the minds of the people, had joined him, in order to increase and support his party, and amongst these, Averardo de Medicis and Puccio Pucci were distinguished. The faction of the great, who might have hoped for a change at the death of the father, saw, with displeasure, the same plan followed by the family, and the danger of their being humbled always increasing. Nicholas Uzzano was dead, who, although one of the first of the faction opposed to the Medicis, had resisted the violent measures which were frequently about to be taken against Cosmo, by pointing out the difficulty of their execution, and the danger of plunging the city into popular tumults. Rinaldo Albizzi, impatient of the growing authority of Cosmo, perceived that one of them must be ruined; whence it became necessary to take some vigorous and bold resolution. It was indispensable to have the greater part of the signiors or nobles favourably inclined towards him, and particularly the first magistrate (*gonfaloniere*;) he waited, however, for the propitious opportunity. He

foresaw that Bernardo Guadagni might be induced to this office, a man, however, whose debts would have prevented him obtaining it, but having paid them for him before the time of election, the office of gonfaloniere fell upon him, and he was easily persuaded by Albizzi to act in concert with him, and other heads of the faction, for the ruin of Cosmo. The plots, framed by the Albizzi, were not unknown to the faction of the Medicis. Cosmo, being advised thereof, returned from the Mugello, and visited the signiory, who assured him that no movement or change should take place; nay, a congress of eight citizens being summoned, two for each quarter, by the advice of which, the government said they wished to be regulated, Cosmo was appointed; a precaution taken to lull his vigilance to slumber, and, at the same time, become masters of his person, by calling him to the palace for the exercise of the office, without giving him any cause for suspicion.

The plan for carrying the blow into execution being concerted, the adherents united, and many people were armed; and on the seventh day of the magistracy of Bernardo, Cosmo was called to the palace, under pretext of consulting with his colleagues in office. He is said to have been advised not to go, such\* were the suspicions his friends entertained, who were able to defend him in his houses, as the people would have taken up arms in his cause. Cosmo, however, confiding in his innocence, frankly presented himself. He alone was arrested, as his brother Lorenzo was in Mugello, who, however, hearing of the danger of Cosmo, hastened to Florence, and being summoned also to the

\* Amm. Ist. lib. 20. Copy of speech from the hand of Cosmo-Fabb. note 49.

palace, warned by the situation of his brother, chose not to obey, and again took refuge in Mugello, where he hastily collected troops to come to his succour. Nicholas Tolentino, captain of the Florentines, a friend of the family of the Medicis, approached with his company as far as Lastra, with the intention of succouring Cosmo. His relations and friends, however, thinking that any hostile movement might cost Cosmo his life, who was in the hands of the enemy's faction, prevented any violence being used\*, and Lorenzo retired to Bologna, and thence to Venice.

In Florence, in the mean time, although the partisans of the house of Medicis were very numerous, fear had congealed them to such a degree, that there was scarcely one who said a word to defend him†. The signiory of Venice sent three ambassadors in haste, to interfere in his favour; the Marquis of Ferrara commanded the chief of the authority, who was his subject, that if Cosmo was placed in his hands, to be put to death, he was to fly with him‡. Amongst private individuals, one of his public and useless defenders was Ambrogio Traversari, general of the Camaldolese, a man celebrated for his christian piety and learning, who, coming in haste from Ferrara to Florence, with that intrepidity which his virtue and character afforded him, presented himself to the governors, speaking to them with energy and truth, in favour of Cosmo, and receiving good

\* Cosmo blames this party: see a copy of the discourse of the years 1433 and 34, taken from a book written in the hand of Cosmo de' Medicis, mentioned by Fabbroni and others.

† There is mentioned only one Piero Francis Ser Ghino, who went shouting throughout the city, against the exile of Cosmo. *Lami Deliciæ Erud.*, extracted from some books, &c.

‡ See the document itself, written by the hand of Cosmo.



words, though vain ones. He had the courage to make the same importunities to Rinaldo Albizzi\*, and was bitterly rebuked.

In the mean time Cosmo remained shut up in a room of the palace†, the keeping of which was intrusted to Frederic Malavolti, who, seeing that Cosmo abstained from food, from dread of poison‡, gave him consolation to fear nothing; and, in order to remove every suspicion, sat down to eat with him. By the connivance of Malavolti, Cosmo was enabled to treat with persons, through whose means, with large sums of money, he gained some of the principal persons of the government, whereby his life was saved §, and he was sentenced, on the 3rd

\* Ambrog. Camal. Comm. book 1., with Silvano Razzi. Life of Cosmo. Read all the detail, and it will be seen that he had some right to the gratitude of Albizzi.

† All historians, copying one another, call it *Little Inn*, (*Albergettino*.) Cosmo, who was there, calls it *Barbary*, (*la Barberia*.) See copy of discourse quoted above.

‡ The fear appears to have had foundation, if we are to give credit to the narrative of this event, given by an unknown pen, in a memorial found in the Medicean archive. Fabb. Vita Cos. note 39. It is there related, that Mariotti Baldovinotti and John della Scelto wished to poison or to strangle him, but Malavolti opposed it.

§ All Florentine historians, copying each other, say, that Malavolti, having brought before him a domestic of the gonfaloniere, called Faganaccio, an agreeable man, to amuse him, Cosmo gave him a note, by which the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova would give him 1100 dollars, (*scudi*.) 100 of which were for him, and 1000 to be consigned to the gonfaloniere, who, lulled to sleep by this cake, like Cerberus, no longer barked against Cosmo. The affair was certainly conducted nearly in the manner we have explained; but Cosmo thus expresses himself, in the memorial quoted above. "Bernardo Guadagni, money being offered to him by two persons, namely, by the captain of war, 500 florins, and by the governor of the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova, 500, which he received in specie, and Mariotto Balduinetti, by means of Baccio d' Antonio de Baccio, 800

October, to banishment to the confines of Padua, thence to Venice, together with Lorenzo, his brother. Various others of the family of the Medicis were sent to the confines, and particularly Averardo, to Naples, towards whom, as he was an active man and a counsellor of Cosmo, the faction appears to have particularly directed its attention, since, in the condemnation, he is always named together with the latter, whilst Lorenzo is scarcely mentioned, because he was, probably, less dreaded\*. In this same sentence we have another example of the bad faith by which the heads of factions deceive the public. The unsuccessful war of Lucca, undertaken with so much popularity, and even with the favour of the Medicis, had found an opposer in Uzzano, but a warm defender in Albizzi, without whose influence, there is reason to believe it would never have taken place; nevertheless, the faction had the impudence to make it a crime in the family of Medicis†, without saying one word of Albizzi. In order, nevertheless, to give it a legitimate varnish, and an appearance of being done with the universal authority, the people were indeed assembled, and their opinion asked; but surrounded by the armed troops of the government. Probably both parties were in error: Cosmo certainly risked his life in present-

florins, took me at night of the 3rd October from the palace, and led me without the gate of San Gallo: they had little courage, for if they wanted money, they should have had 10,000 and more, to get out of danger."

\* See the condemnation, which begins: *Magnifici ex potentis, &c.* Fabb. Vita Cos. note 40.

† "Et iterum postea ipse Cosmus et Averardus suis malitiis et conspirationibus . . . operati sunt, ut Florentinus populus guerram sumeret cum Lucanis, quæ guerra quasi fuit ruina, non solum Florentin republicæ, sed totius Italiæ status, &c.," in the same note.

ing himself at the palace ; but confidence in innocence is an excellent thing in a government, where the laws, and not factions, command. His enemies committed the error of doing the crime only by half, by irritating, without destroying, the head of the other party. Well did Rinaldo Albizzi foresee the consequences, and lament them. Cosmo, in going to his banishment, was honoured wherever he passed, both by the people and princes, and received by the government of Venice, not as an exile, but as one of the principal personages of Europe. That cautious republic endeavoured, probably, to attach him permanently to her, foreseeing what advantage a commercial country can derive from the information possessed by Cosmo, as well as from the opulence of so powerful a family. He was here visited and entertained by his learned and virtuous friend, Ambrosio the Camaldolese, who speaks in his letters of the firmness with which the brothers Medicis supported their adverse fortune\*. Cosmo's prudence counselled him, during his exile, not only not to irritate the heads of the government, but to give them salutary advice how to act against the badly-disposed†. His manner of life, in that city, was regulated by the same prudence and modesty. He had chosen the monastery of San George for his habitation, where he afterwards erected a library, after a design of the celebrated Michelozzi, his voluntary companion in exile, and to which library he made a present of not a few codes‡.

Agitations still continued in the pontifical states, even

\* Ambrog. Comm. Epis. lib. 8. epis. 53.

† It is inferred, from the Register of Foreign Letters, Arch. of the Riformazioni, tom. 25. Fabb. Vita Cosm. note 45, where the responsive letter, to the advice of Cosmo, is mentioned.

‡ Vasari Vite de' Pettori, vol. 1.

after peace. Eugene possessed not a character adapted to those stormy times, and the edifice propped up by his predecessor, was about to fall. A council, too, had assembled at Basle, with his approbation. It was soon perceived, however, how dangerous such assemblies are to the pontifical authority, when not directed by it, since the council began to speak in a tone, in which it shewed its superiority over the pontiff. This sacred war, which was waged with him from afar, was accompanied by one of real arms in his own states. His captain, Fortebraccio, having rebelled, was gaining various castles, and this man and the enemies of the pope were secretly assisted by the Duke of Milan. Sforza, keeping a secret understanding with the duke, entered the Marche of Ancona, and dissimulating that he was acting in the name of the council of Basle, occupied Jesi, Osimo, Fermo, Recanati, Ancona, &c., whilst Anthony Ordelaffi became master of Forli, and Sigismond Malatesta got possession of Cervea. Then it was that the pope had recourse, in order to gain Sforza over to him, to creating him his vicegerent for life, and mayor of the church. Sforza, marching to drive Fortebraccio from Tivoli, was secretly blamed for it by the duke, who, with the same artifices, caused Piccinino to be called in the name of the Perugians. The pope was finally obliged to  
<sup>1434.</sup> fly from Rome, in a boat on the Tiber, disguised as a monk, and, arriving at Civita Vecchia, went on board a galley of the Florentines, by whom he had been invited to take shelter in their states, and on the 12th of June arrived at Leghorn, where honours were paid to him. He was afterwards received at Florence with the usual pompous ceremonial, and took up his abode at Santa Maria Novella. Rome was occupied by Fortebraccio, and various cities of the pontifical state, by Piccinino.

The Florentines had tried all methods of preventing this new beginning of the war ; but perceiving that the Duke of Milan was the soul of all, Imola being taken by the troops, he still kept in Romagna, and no longer able to bear his greediness of gold and bad faith, they united a part of their troops, commanded by Tolentino, with those of the Venetians, led on by Gattamelata. Piccinino coming up with his troops, an affair took place near Imola. Piccinino was inferior in force, but enjoyed the great advantage of being alone in the command ; whilst the three leaders of the confederacy, and particularly the imperious bishop Vitelleschi, who commanded the ecclesiastical troops, rendered the military operations at once variable, uncertain and unconnected. The warnings of Tolentino were in vain. A part of the army, incited by the snares laid for them, and the apparent fear of Piccinino, passing the bridge over a torrent which falls into the Santerno, became as it were divided from the remainder : impelled by necessity, Tolentino repaired there with all speed, fought with his wonted valour, but all was in vain, since the various bodies of troops not co-operating with concerted measures, the whole were filled with confusion and dismay. The army of the confederates was broken, 3,500 horse were made prisoners, and 1,000 infantry, together with Tolentino, Gran Paul Orsini, Astorre Manfredi, and other leaders. Gattamelata and Guido Antonio Manfredi, Lord of Faenza, saved themselves by flight. Little blood, however, was spilt in these wars ; only four were killed and thirty wounded\*.

The news of this defeat being brought to Florence, raised the clamours of the people against the government,

\* Cron. di Bologna, Pogg. Hist. lib. 7: Amm. Ist. lib. 20.

and the party of the Medicis fanned the flame of discontent more and more. The absence of Cosmo made the public feel more deeply his loss; the poor, whom his riches fed, commerce, the branches of which of considerable importance, might be drawn away by this family to Venice, made his return an event to be desired by the most prudent citizens. The contrary party was on the decline: a letter from Agnola Acciagoli to Cosmo was intercepted, wherein measures were proposed for bringing him back to his country, telling him that he should endeavour to gain the favour of Neri Capponi, who would easily favour his recall, which shews at least the authority Neri enjoyed in the Florentine republic. Acciajoli was arrested and tortured, and afterwards sent into exile: the favourers of Cosmo, therefore were increasing in number, and came forward with greater courage, as they saw the ruling faction become still more odious. The election of a signiory of the party of the Medicis, was sufficient to re-establish him, as a hostile one had been the cause of his expulsion. Albizzi, seeing this, assembled the heads to deliberate upon the measures to be taken for maintaining themselves in power, and the man who saw the popular faction turning for the greater part in favour of the Medicis, wished to join the party of the humbled and degraded great. The others were not agreed, and particularly Mariotto Balduinetti. The signiory was changed, and one friendly to the house of Medicis was chosen, in which Nicholas Cocco was chief magistrate. Albizzi thought no further delay ought to be suffered, but that taking up arms with their partisans, before the new government could consolidate itself, they should oblige the old one to create an authority (*balia*), dismiss the signiors already drawn, elect new ones, and fill the offices with their own friends. Pallas

Strozzi opposed this, asserting it was too violent a measure, and only to be had recourse to when they discovered in the new signiory any disposition to act against them; that they would do well to attend to the affairs of the republic at a time when the troops of the Duke of Milan were at their gates, instead of thinking of changing the government of the state. No resolution therefore was taken, to the great sorrow of Albizzi, who was a lover of vigorous and violent parties.

The new magistracy entered into office, and having an eye to the re-establishment of the house of Medicis, after having sentenced to prison the preceding gonfaloniere, for being guilty of peculation, summoned some of the principal of the contrary faction too hastily to the palace, viz., Albizzi, Barbadori, Peruzzi, not perceiving that the house of Medicis was not sufficiently strong against that faction. Albizzi then assembled his armed followers in the square of Sant Apollinare, where Peruzzi and Barbadori appeared, with other of their colleagues, but various others failed to attend; and amongst these, Strozzi, who, finally attracted by the repeated embassies sent him by Albizzi, came with only two followers, and being bitterly reproached by Albizzi, he answered him in words which were not understood, turned his horse back, and returned home. Albizzi, nevertheless, had sufficient face to contend with the signiory, and render the event at least uncertain. The signiory, however, perceiving the error they had committed, caused the gates of the palace to be shut, and sent persons to Rinaldo, who were to persuade him that the signiory was actuated with no bad intention towards him; that if the dread of Cosmo being restored had made him take up arms, he might well lay them down, because this counsel had never been

given. Albizzi wished to take advantage of the moment, and trusting little to words, thought facts only necessary: but his colleagues, and amongst them, Peruzzi, either more credulous or more weak than himself, refused to act in concert with him. The authority of the pontiff was also solicited, to persuade Albizzi. The pope, induced by the government, invited Albizzi, by means of the patriarch Vitelleschi, to Santa Maria Novella, and assured him that the magistracy would make no innovations. He was prevailed upon, very unwillingly, to lay down his arms; but the coolness evinced by his colleagues, persuaded him to it the more.

The signiory in the mean time, ordering numerous bodies of troops to advance secretly to Florence, and occupying the strong places of the city, called the people into the square, constituted a new authority, which condemned Albizzi, with a number of his partisans to exile. Amongst the rest was Pallas Strozzi, who suffered the penalty due to his weakness; a man of mild manners, an amateur of Greek and Latin literature, of the cultivation and study of the former of which in Florence and Italy he was the author; a man formed more for literary *otium* than for civil tempests, in which a certain courage, promptitude of action, and a ferociousness of manners are indispensably necessary. He lived peaceably in exile the rest of his life, till he was ninety years of age, cultivating letters, loving his country, and died in Padua. The pope, whose good faith the signiory had abused, complained, justifying his conduct towards Albizzi, who frankly replied that the folly was entirely his own, to have hoped that the pope, who was driven from his seat, could maintain him in his native country; adding, that it was not at all grievous for him to leave a city where men could effect more than the laws; a golden sentence, and only



too true in the Florentine government, regulated at all times by the will of the factious, but which could not be quoted by Albizzi, because he himself had been frequently the instrument of such violation.

This man, who had inherited the power of the father, and had long maintained it by his prudence, went a wanderer amongst the enemies of the Florentines, indulging the hope of returning to his native land by force of arms; when he saw every attempt vain, he made a pilgrimage to the holy Sepulchre, upon his return from whence, he died in Ancona. His father had lived the first part of his life an exile, and had terminated it, powerful and honoured by his country: the son began his life most honourably, filled the most splendid offices of the state, and terminated his career unhappily. A Tuscan letterato, Anthony Minucci of old Prato (*Prato Vecchio*), a celebrated lawyer, employed himself much in favour of Cosmo; as we have seen Traversari do the same in his imprisonment; and it was very proper that the letterati should be of the party of a family who were such great promoters of literature.

Cosmo returned to his country at the beginning of October, amidst universal applause, as Tully had done to Rome from his exile; and exactly under the circumstances of Tully, with whom he enjoyed the common name of *Father of his country*, after his death. The return of Cosmo is drawn by an excellent pencil in the hall of the Royal Villa of *Poggio Caiano*\*.

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\* See Macchiavelli. Ammiratori's Florentine History, and particularly the detail, written by the hand of Cosmo, above quoted.

### CHAPTER III.

TYRANNY OF COSMO. — PEACE WITH THE DUKE OF MILAN. — AFFAIRS OF NAPLES. — ALPHONSO OF ARRAGON. — THE GENOESE DECLARE THEMSELVES FREE. — RUPTURE BETWEEN THE FLORENTINES AND THE DUKE OF MILAN. — ARRIVAL OF THE EMPEROR PALEOLOGOS AT FLORENCE. — COUNCIL FOR THE CONJUNCTION OF THE GREEK AND LATIN CHURCH. — CONDITIONS OF THAT UNION. — WAR OF LOMBARDY. — EXTRAORDINARY SUC-  
COUR AFFORDED BY THE VENETIANS TO BRESCIA. — ARRIVAL OF PICCININO IN TUSCANY. — IS DEFEATED AT ANGHIAI. — PEACE OF CREMONA. — ALPHONSO OF ARRAGON BECOMES MASTER OF NAPLES. — SUCCESSIVE DEFEATS OF PICCININO. — HIS DEATH. — PEACE THAT ENSUES THEREFROM. — FRESH WAR. — DEFEAT OF THE DUKE OF MILAN. — DIES AND LEAVES ALPHONSO OF ARRAGON HEIR TO HIS ESTATES.

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THE balance being overturned, and the party which had been oppressed having gained the ascendancy, began, as customary, to abuse their victory. Cosmo might have been of mild manners, but we are not to expect mildness and moderation amidst the fury of factions, neither the warmth of the passions, nor perhaps even prudence allowing the exercise of those virtues: the severity that was employed consequently became excessive. Besides the heads of the faction, opposed to the Medicis, a great number of citizens were either exiled, sent to the confines, or declared rebels, without any other crime being alleged against them, than friendship or the ties of blood with the former\* ; whilst the estates of others were confis-

\* In the histories of Boninsegni, a synchronic writer, the names of the persons, and exiled families, or those rendered incapable of em-

cated, divided amongst, or sold to, the conquerors. Blood was only wanting, says a great historian \*, in order to make this proscription similar to that of Sylla, or that of the triumvirs; nor was it even wanting, although its effusion was not so extensive, since the Venetian republic, paying little regard to her own dignity, caused five or six rebels to be arrested, and sent to Florence, who were beheaded†. By this act of obsequiousness, she endeavoured either to show herself favourable to Cosmo, or, acting probably upon a more profound system of politics, thought that the blood which would be spilt would give greater warmth to the animosity of parties, in a republic, whose increasing power gave her so much cause for jealousy, all the ancient defects remaining in the government, by which, under the name of liberty, the despotism exercised by the powerful, and not the laws, had always ruled. New provisions were made, whereby the conquering faction were not only to remain masters of the government, but security given them, that it should not be taken away from them. The election of magistrates, depended in great measure upon chance: and, although at the option of factions, selections of citizens were made who were considered capable of holding the most important offices, and these lists of selections were burnt and re-

ployments, are mentioned, and are more than one hundred in number, without reckoning all the individuals of many families mentioned collectively.

\* Macch. lib. 5. Ist. Fior. See, too, Nardi, Ist. Fior. lib. 1, and above all, Nerli, Commentary of civil Facts of Florence, at the beginning of book 3.

† Amongst them was the son of the gonfaloniere, Bernardo Guadagni, who, serving the views of Albizzi, had caused Cosmo to be arrested; but, in spite of the same, had afterwards saved him, whence he appeared to merit some indulgence, the more so as they were only guilty of having broken the confines.—Macch. Ist. lib. 5. Nerli, lib. 3.

newed at caprice, prudence not allowing them, however, to do so too frequently, it might, nevertheless happen, from the instability or caprice of mankind, that friends became enemies, and, taken from the signiory, might at least offer an obstacle to the despotism of the ruling party.

In order to secure for the future, all the offices of importance being perpetuated in their friends, it was ordained that the old signiory should have an authority in the creation of the new one, and particularly that those magistrates, who *have right over blood*, should be of their sect\*: a provision the most adapted to maintain the government in the same hands. The measures were so well concerted, that throughout the whole life of Cosmo, the government continued in an apathy and quietude attendant upon servitude; none of those popular movements took place, by which the oppressed citizens endeavour to regain their lost rights; movements, which frequently degenerate into dangerous seditions, but nevertheless, none of those legitimate endeavours of eloquence or of patriotic virtue, whereby the divided powers coming in contact with each other, are obliged to return to those limits again, from which they departed. The whole government of Cosmo was a government of the few, that is, of his dependants. From this moment, in short, it may be said, that the republic fell under the dominion of the House of Medicis, and, although after the death of Cosmo, various convulsions took place, whereby the citizens sometimes shook off their chains, and enjoyed short intervals of liberty, they soon fell into their former snare, until the old forms being abolished, they were finally settled under the prin-

\* Macch. Ist. lib. 5. Copy of a Discourse of Cosmo, above quoted. Nerli, lib. 2.

city of that house. The government having passed into the hands of the rich commoners, as Cosmo was the first amongst them for his riches, and his adherents, he may be said to have become prince of the republic. In him were united prudence, vigilance, capacity in political affairs, together with the most extensive knowledge of mercantile affairs, the foundation of the Florentine power. These qualities rendered him worthy of being the head of it: but the exile of so many illustrious citizens, the ruin of so many rich families who were despoiled of their estates, the words and the winks even noted as crimes in a country which called itself *free*, the terror and consternation scattered throughout the city, present us at least with the principal of that government as tyrannical. Nor can we entirely excuse Cosmo, because all was done, not with tacit assent, but by his impulse, as is inferred from that cruel answer he gave those who mildly insinuated to him, that by the ruin of so many, the city would be spoilt: *the city had better be spoilt, said he, than lost\**. Cosmo possesses great merits in the eyes of posterity; but these merits must not cloak his defects when he appears before the tribunal of history.

The war was still going on with the Duke of Milan. Tolentino being made prisoner in the last defeat had been cruelly detained by the duke, although the other prisoners had been restored. He died in being conducted from one prison to another upon the Apennines, either by falling from a rock, or precipitated from it by the duke, which was believed by all Italy, who were acquainted with the cruel nature of that man. The Florentines chose  
 1435. to do honour to their captain, by burying him with magnificent pomp in *Santa Maria del Fiore*, and he was

\* Ammir. Istor. lib. 21. Macch. lib. 5. Nerli, lib. 3.

painted amongst other captains of the republic, upon the walls of that church, by Andrew Castagno. The black and dark mind of the duke constantly gave new proofs of his perfidy. It was probably his design to make a prisoner of the pope, who was at Florence. He was frequently accustomed to leave the city early in the morning, to go to St. Anthony; the Bishop of Novara, ambassador of the duke, concerted with a Spanish soldier called Riccio, and some Florentine citizens, a plan for taking him, and carrying him hastily to Lucca, which was dependant upon the duke. Piccinino, who was at the baths of the Siennese, was to favour the enterprise. The conspiracy being discovered, either through the remorse felt by the bishop, or by intercepted letters, Riccio was hanged, and Bastiano Capponi beheaded\*. Peace was nevertheless made through the mediation of Nicholas Duke of Ferrara, followed by a confederacy between the Pontiff, the Venetians, the Florentines, and the duke.

Soon, however, the seeds of a new war began to shew themselves in the death of Jane II., Queen of Naples. She had no legitimate heir: Louis of Angiers, who was adopted by her was dead; his brother declared himself heir, although the testament of Jane was not granted†: Alphonso, King of Arragon, who had been once adopted by her, and afterwards disinherited from ingratitude, was one of the pretendants; finally, the pope maintained that it fell to him as a pontifical feu, and sent Vitelleschi there provided with monitories and troops. The kingdom was divided into various parties; the Angers party, however, appeared the strongest, as Naples and other principal cities declared for it. Alphonso, who was in Sicily, endeavoured to get possession of Gaeta, which,

\* Ammir. Ist. lib. 21.

† Murat. Ann. d'Italia.

being straightened both by land and sea, had recourse to the Genoese for assistance; the latter, who were under the dominion of the Duke of Milan, enemy of Alphonso, sent them thirteen large ships, and three galleys full of picked warriors, commanded by Biageo d'Assereto, one of the secretaries of the government, who wielded the sword equally well as the pen, and who had already greatly distinguished himself in a nation celebrated for its marine. The Genoese were met by the Catalonian armada of Alphonso, far superior in number; they fought from morning to evening, and the animosity which reigned between the Catalonians and the Genoese increased the fury of the battle. The exploits of the Genoese were finally crowned with a complete victory, all the ships being taken except one, together with King Alphonso himself, and many princes and barons of the kingdom\*. The duke wished that the prisoners should be conducted to Milan for his greater trophy; and either through politics, caprice, the council of Piccinino, or won by the manners and eloquence of Alphonso, he not only treated the latter with grandeur and liberality, together with his fellow prisoners, but gave them their liberty, entering moreover into a league with Alphonso. The latter, who was alike eloquent and cunning, easily persuaded the duke how dangerous it would be for him that the brother of the King of France should gain the kingdom of Naples, since he would be placed between the states of the two brothers; that he would with difficulty preserve his own; that he, on the contrary, had every interest to be

\* Giornale. Napol. Rer. Ital. Script. tom. 21. The king would not give himself up to Assareto: causing the commandants to be named, he preferred the Giustiniani family, sovereigns of Scio.—Foliet. lib. 10.

his friend \*. The Genoese, already irritated by other causes, brooked it very unwillingly, that, without making any mention of it to them, the duke had disposed of so many valuable prisoners, who, rebelling, drove the ducal governors from the city, and set themselves at liberty. They sent the news of this event to the Florentines, who could do no less than rejoice at it, nor failed they to give to the Genoese, if not openly, at least secretly, the assistance which they demanded.

<sup>1436.</sup> Pope Eugene was still in Florence; and although, after having regulated his affairs, he had been recalled by the Romans, he was not willing to obey the invitation so speedily, in order that they might continue to feel for a longer time the evil consequent upon the absence of their sovereign. Before his departure the magnificent edifice of the Holy Mary of the Flower, (*Santa Maria del Fiore*), being finished, and crowned with the cupola, he passed his benediction upon it with the greatest magnificence. For this ceremony, a bridge or corridor was built, two arms high from the ground, adorned with tapestry, festoons, leaves, and covered with carpet, which extended from Santa Maria Novella, where the pontiff inhabited, passing by St. John's, to the church which was to receive the benediction. Seven cardinals, accompanied him, with thirty-seven bishops and archbishops, who, being visible through the open corridor, presented a venerable procession to the people, who beheld it. The ceremony was performed with more spiritual luxury on the day of the annunciation, after which the pope went to Bologna.

The peace with the duke was vacillating. The Florentines and Venetians had allied themselves with the



Genoese, amounting almost to a beginning of hostilities, which, indeed, took place without any further declaration of war. It was known that Rinaldo Albizzi, having held strict conferences with the Duke of Milan, had encouraged him to war, and that the latter, from his instability, and the hatred he bore the Florentines, was ready to march. After the death of Tolentino, the Florentines, being without any leader of renown, endeavoured to attach Francis Sforza permanently to their interest, who was the bravest man of the age. Son of a father who had received from them the first permanent advancements, born in their states, in San Miniato, of a lawful matrimony with Lucia Treziana\*, he was looked upon as their fellow-citizen, and rivalled his father in valour, as much as he surpassed him in goodness†. With these virtues, he became one of the greatest princes of Italy. Coming to Florence to receive the command, he was highly honoured by the Florentines, and, as was proper for a youthful warrior, entertained with public balls in the square of the Signiors, (Piazza dei Signori,) which were attended by the most beautiful and graceful women. The military spectacle of tilting was also offered him, in the square of the Holy Cross‡. His assistance was soon wanted, since Piccinino, general of the duke, demanded a passage through Tuscany, under the pretext of repairing to the kingdom of Naples; and, upon the same being denied him, he boasted of being able to pass it by force. Count Francis failed not to march rapidly from the ecclesiastical states, where he was aiding the Florentines. Piccinino had advanced upon the Pisan

\* Buonicon. Ann. Miniaten.

† John Simonetta (De Rebus Ges. Francis. Sforza) relates various traits of prudence and meekness, whereby he often moderated the sanguinary orders of his father.

‡ Amm. Ist. lib. 21.

territory, and they halted in front of each other; Sforza upon the left bank of the Arno, at Santa Gonda, Piccinino upon the right. Their forces were almost equal. The Florentines had ordered Sforza and Neri Capponi, commissary, to hold themselves upon the defensive, as, the pope holding out to them hopes of peace, they thought fit to temporize. Piccinino, interpreting the fixed position of the Florentines for fear, directed his attention to laying waste the country; and finally pitched his camp around Barga. The Florentines then moved, since the loss of Barga would have been followed by that of the whole mountain of Pistoia, and, leaving Sforza with full liberty to act, a body of about 3,000 men was sent there, who attacked the besiegers from an advantageous position, whilst the people of Barga made a  
 1437. vigorous sortie. The enemy sustained not the assault; they were routed, lost their baggage and all their machines of siege. Amongst the prisoners was the son of Francis Gonzaga, Prince of Mantua, who, flying from his father, from a desire of signalizing himself, bore arms under Piccinino, in favour of the Duke of Milan, whilst the father was leader of the Venetians; but, meeting with a friendly reception from Sforza, he enrolled under his banners\*.

Piccinino, having no further force to keep the field, retired into Lombardy. Sforza regained the lost castles, and, daily advancing, occupied Massa and Sarzana, whence, retroceding towards Lucca, he took possession of Monte Carlo; and, in the sacking of the castle of Casa Nuova, preserving unspotted to her husband a beautiful young woman, who had, by singular accident, fallen into his hands, he proved that he knew alike how to

\* Neri Capponi, *Commen. Pogg. Hist. lib. 6, 7. Simonetta, lib. 4, De Rebus Ges. Fran. Sforz.*

emulate Scipio in continence, as he rivalled him in valour\*. The Florentines then resolved upon undertaking the enterprise against Lucca. They first made every attempt, by threatening the desolation of the country, afterwards tried the effect of persuading the Lucchese to capitulate, but all was in vain, as the Lucchese defended themselves bravely†.

Hostilities had commenced in Lombardy. The Venetians, whom Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, had left in anger, from having been suspected by them, demanded Sforza from the Florentines, who unwillingly granted him to them. But the count, who held probably some secret treaty with the Duke of Milan, by whom he had been flattered with the matrimony with Bianca, his daughter, having accepted the command of the Florentines, pretended, afterwards, that he was not obliged to pass the Po in his operations. It was not possible to serve the Venetians upon these conditions; being consequently dismissed, and returning to Florence, new difficulties arose, which engaged Cosmo de Medicis to repair twice to Venice, in order to persuade the senate to retain Sforza in their pay‡. But those prudent men, who were wont to suspect, with reason, the faith of the generals of that age, had, probably, perceived the little loyalty which actuated the count: every offer was, therefore,

\* This curious adventure is read of in Simonetta, at the place quoted: the count redeemed her bridegroom, and married him to her with a good dowry.

† Neri Capp. Comm. Pogg. Hist. lib. 6, 7.

‡ The mission of such a man, and of Davangati afterwards, for the same end, may make it supposed, they wished better to spy out the intentions of the Venetians; it appearing, perhaps, to the Florentines, that their aggrandizement, and, consequently, the acquisition of Lucca, did not please the former.

refused; and, indeed, the count shortly afterwards went into the service of the duke, which was followed by the Florentines agreeing no longer to molest the Lucchese\*.

The restless mind of the duke, however, unable to remain tranquil, although in peace with the pope, caused Piccinino to make war upon him, as if he acted of himself. This man, either by force or stratagem, got possession of almost all the Romagna; and, returning into Lombardy, began to act openly in the name of the duke; took Casal Maggiore, scoured the Brescian territory, and caused much damage to the Venetians, who perceived the error they had committed, in separating themselves from the Florentines. The latter, too,

viewed with an evil eye the losses suffered by the Venetians, and the aggrandizement of the common enemy; whence, although disgusted by repulses received upon the conduct of the count, being warmly urged by the Venetian ambassadors to renew the league, they did so, and the Count Sforza himself was taken into their pay, who, having been fed with vain hopes by the duke, upon the promised matrimony with his daughter, had finally perceived the fraud practised upon him†. The count marched, with the troops of the Florentines and the Venetians, into Lombardy, where, in order to succour the states principally attacked, the greater flame of the war was expected to break out.

In the mean time Florence enjoyed the majestic sight of the Greek Emperor John Palæologos, of the pope, and the Greek and Latin prelates, united in sacred

\* Neri Capp. Comm. Pogg. lib. 7. Amm. lib. 21.

† It is related, that dissimulation went so far as even to fix the day of the nuptials, and to make the garments and invitations for the nuptial festival. Murat. Ann. d' Italia.

assembly, to decide upon various controverse points, in order to unite the Greek and Latin churches. John came not to Italy for merely spiritual views. His empire, reduced almost to the mere walls of Constantinople, from the inroads made by the Turks, demanded temporal succours of the pope and the christian princes. The destructive whirlwind which threatened the Greek empire, had been arrested for a moment by the arms of Tamerlane, who had given a terrible blow to the Ottoman power in the battle of Angora, and made Bajazet prisoner; but this storm being dissipated, the Turkish power was re-established, and even continued increasing; whilst the tottering throne of John could only be maintained through the means of the foreign aid which he came to implore.

The council of Basle, which threatened the supreme authority of the pontiff, had been proscribed by Eugene, who had ordered another in Ferrara. Thither the Greek emperor was invited by Eugene, whilst the rebellious council of Basle called him into that city. Both parties, seeing what an augmentation of authority they would derive from his presence, offered him vessels to conduct him from Constantinople. Nine galleys, equipped at Venice, and at Candia, by order of Eugene, and of which his nephew, Condulmiero, was admiral, were more speedy than those of the council of Basle; and if the two sacred squadrons had met, they would have fought with temporal arms; as the pope's fleet had orders to attack and sink the fleet of Basle. John was received by the Venetians with triumphal pomp: the doge, the senators upon the celebrated Bucentaur, accompanied by twelve other galleys of gala, the sea around, covered with innumerable gondolas, superbly adorned, presented to the eyes of the Greeks the pomp appropriate to a maritime

nation\*. From Venice he was conducted to Ferrara, together with all the ecclesiastical and secular attendants. In the former, besides the old patriarch Joseph, and other metropolitans, we find the respectable names of Mark and Bessarion. The Greeks preserved their pride of ecclesiastical primacy to a degree, that the patriarch would not leave the boat until the ceremony to be observed with Eugene was got ready; when, considering him as his equal, he saluted him with a fraternal kiss, nor would any Greek prelate kiss the foot of the holy father. The emperor was more humble, who, in the act of bending his knee, was prevented by the pope. The patriarch was induced, by ambition, to expose himself, in his declining years, to a long and dangerous journey, hoping to rival the head of the church of the West, and to learn from him to shake off the yoke of sovereigns, as he boasted to his friends, with an impudent frankness†.

This sacred assembly, however, was very soon driven from Ferrara by a pestilential fever, and by the neighbouring troops of the Duke of Milan, who was an enemy of the pope; no city was, therefore, found better adapted to receive it than Florence. Cosmo and the pious Florentines took every care to receive their ecclesiastical and

\* Sanato Life of the Doges of Venice, Rer. Ital. l. 22. The follies of the ceremonials deserve only observation, in order to be acquainted with the ridiculous pride and pretensions of the various orders of persons. The doge went to visit the emperor, who took off the former's cap, and the latter his hat, and they agreed that in every other meeting they should remain covered. The doge went to visit the patriarch upon another galley; he took off his cap, but the patriarch hardly moved from his seat, and remained covered, whilst he raised himself on foot to the other prelates, and embraced them.

† Silves. Syropolo, Historia Unionis, &c.

secular guests, and treat them with magnificence. The Latin prelates, a few of whom only appeared in Ferrara, considerably increased in Florence. The harsh, and perhaps, impolitic, manners of the council of Basle had caused it to be abandoned by many; since, besides various decrees upon the diminution of the authority and the revenues of the pope, they wished to reform and reduce the clergy to their ancient ecclesiastical severity. This act only contributed to weaken still more the authority of that council, All eyes were turned towards Florence. Controverse points were disputed in the magnificent hall adjoining Santa Maria Novella\*: First, the double or simple procession of the Holy Ghost: Secondly, the consecration of the unleavened, and the fermented bread: Thirdly, the nature of purgatory. Fourthly, the pre-eminence of the sovereign pontiff. After twenty-five sessions, wherein the questions proposed were debated with all the cavils of theological subtleties, the temporary union was made, which was disapproved of by the rest of the absent Greek clergy; and the most eloquent champion of the Greek symbol, the learned and illustrious Bessarion, promoted to the cardinal's hat, was regarded as a traitor, for being seduced by the flattering offer held out to him. The old Patriarch Joseph never saw the union he so much sighed for, as

\* The magnificent entrance of this hall was in the Via della Scala, and corresponded with the convent of Santa Maria Novella. It had been built for the lodging of the popes and royal personages since 1418. The length of the saloon was about one hundred and thirty-eight arms, the breadth twenty-three, and as many in height. This saloon, at present, makes part of the new monastery of the nuns of San Stephano. The length was disproportioned to the breadth; the great saloon of the old palace has ninety arms in length, and thirty-seven of breadth.

he died before it was made. It took place with all solemnity, in the cathedral of *Santa Maria del Fiore*, where the two cardinals, Julian and Bessarion, having ascended the pulpit, read the articles of the convention in the two languages, and embraced each other amidst universal applauses\*. It was stipulated that the pope was to pay the Greeks the expenses of their return, that he should moreover maintain, in Greece, two galleys, and three hundred soldiers, a succour very inadequate to the danger and imminent ruin which threatened the Greek empire. The Florentines gained a few exemptions for their merchandise in Constantinople.

The council of Basle, in the mean time, continued losing its credit. Before its final extinction, however, it ventured, as a last effort, to depose Eugene, and create Amedeo, Duke of Savoy, new pontiff. He had abdicated his dominions, retiring with a few nobles into the delicious solitude of Ripaglia upon the lake of Geneva†; but probably repenting, he had preserved, under an humble garment, his secular ambition, and, although he shed tears at the news of his elevation, he willingly accepted an invitation which brought him upon a more sublime scene of action. He took the name of Felix V., but the universal approbation, bestowed by the christian world upon the acts of the Florentine council, insensibly dissolved that of Basle, which fell into oblivion; and the new pope, abdicating his new kingdom a few years afterwards, returned to enjoy tranquillity in his delightful hermitage.

\* “*Silves. Syrop. Vera Histor. Unionis non Veræ*,” a title added by the translator for want of the true ones. Syropolo was one of the four cross bearers of the patriarch Joseph.

† It was afterwards an abbey of the Carthusians, suppressed in the latter years.



Whilst the disputes were carrying on in Florence upon theology, the war was raging in Lombardy. Brescia had been besieged by Piccinino, and had suffered the most ferocious assaults, and the shocks given her by the machines of war with great intrepidity. That leader of the Duke of Milan had sacrificed numerous bodies of troops to it, who, finally growing tumultuous at his persevering obstinacy, obliged him to leave it\*. The siege was converted into a blockade, and all the passages being shut up, whence provisions could be conveyed to the city, she was suffering the extreme of want, and would finally have fallen, when the Venetians thought of hastening to her succour by one of those extraordinary expedients, which prove what the industry of man is capable of. This city is distant about ten miles from the western bank of the lake of Garda. The length of the lake extends from north to south-west about thirty miles, whilst the irregular breadth exceeds not twelve. It begins upon the Trentino, where, at the village called Torbole, the river Sarca and other torrents pour their waters into it, and in the other extremity of the same side stands Peschiera, where the Mincio rises, which falls into the marshes at Mantua. The enemy were masters of Peschiera, and of the other banks of the lake; Torbole was in the hands of the Venetians, the part of the lake which looks towards Brescia was free from the enemy, who dreaded not the Venetians penetrating into it, who neither possessed ships, nor were able to get them upon the lake. An ingenious Greek, named Sorbolo, proposed to make ships pass from Venice into the lake of Garda. At first he was laughed at; but had eloquence sufficient to persuade any one he

\* Soldi Istor. Bresciana Rer. Italic. tom. 21.

would overcome every difficulty. The Venetian senate lent an ear to an enterprise, which, if happily executed, would give lustre to the republic, and, in the mean time, animated the hopes of the Brescians. Two large galleys, and about thirty vessels, between large and small, were made to pass up the rapid current of the Adige, drawn by means of oxen, above Verona to the place nearest to the lake, or of easiest access, that is to Mauro, distant about twelve miles from the lake where Torbole is situate. For six miles the road is level. A small lake follows, called St. Andrew's. To this lake the ships were drawn by land, with no great difficulty. The most arduous part of the enterprise, however, remained still to be accomplished. Between this lake and the Benacus\* there is a mountain with a craggy rock; a torrent, which descended from the mountain, formed only the least-difficult passage, but it was necessary to break down trees, pull great part of the mountain into the lake below, raise the earth again, in order to render the ascent more easy, and cover the masses. The ships being drawn to the top of the mountain, there still remained a no less difficult part to perform, the regulation of the force of the descent, in order that the weight might not precipitate them down too fast. They descended slowly, with many ropes bound round the masts, and arrived safely at the lake. Fifteen days appear to have been employed in this passage of twelve miles: in a few days, these vessels were repaired, and brought succours to the famished Brescians; whilst the enemy remained astonished at the sudden appearance of the fleet.

This enterprise has been attested by ocular witnesses: it rivals many performed by the ancients, or, at least,

\* Classic name for the lake of Garda.

justifies them, and surpasses the far boasted achievement of Mahomet, who, fourteen years afterwards, caused a fleet to be transported by a shorter and more level road to the siege of Constantinople. Probably the fame and example of this first enterprise suggested the idea of the second. Sanuto tells us that about one hundred and twenty pair of oxen were employed for every galley; that the sails were spread too when the wind was favourable, and this work cost 15,000 ducats, without reckoning the expense of oxen, and the pay of the sappers and miners. Two reflections strike us, first, that Brescia might have been reduced to the extreme of famine, as the time of the performance of this labour was tedious. Secondly, that the enemy's stupidity must have been great, in not attempting to interrupt the land operation, which continued so many days. Probably they treated it as ridiculous and impossible; probably, too, the force the Venetians had at Torbole, was superior to that which the enemy could bring down, and was therefore sufficient to protect the enterprise\*.

In the mean time the two most celebrated leaders of the age, Count Sforza and Piccinino were in front of each other. The count had gone from Tuscany into Lombardy, making a rapid and masterly march; Piccinino, having routed a considerable body of Venetians upon the lake of Garda, was continually threatening Brescia. The Venetian fleet upon the lake had been beaten by that of the duke, commanded by Piccinino, with the capture of the Venetian purveyors, and Taddeo, Marquis of Este.

\* The writers who speak of this wonderful operation, are very numerous: the most respectable are Biondo Flavio, Sabellico, who visited the place a few years afterwards, and recognised the traces of the road, Poggio, all cotemporary writers, and Sanuto later, but who took his accounts from authentic documents.

The Count Sforza advanced to repair these losses by the valley of Lodrone: Piccinino advanced to contend the passage with him, and, on the 9th November, an obstinate battle took place, in which Piccinino was defeated, and ran the risk of being taken prisoner \*; but, not at all disconcerted by the loss, in order to cancel the disgrace, when the enemy least expected it, he approached Verona, suddenly scaled the walls, occupied the new citadel, and afterwards the remainder of the city. Castel Vecchio, that of San Felix, and one of the gates alone remained in the hands of the enemy. Piccinino was so much pleased at this daring and successful enterprise, undertaken after a defeat, that he wrote an insulting letter to Cosmo in Florence. But Count Francis, who yielded nothing to the enemy in activity, hastened rapidly with his troops to Verona, promising to his officers, who disadvised his proceedings, that, if one of the fortresses still held out, he would certainly regain the city. The batteries were already prepared against the castle of San Felix, which, being unprovided with troops and provisions, could make little resistance, when the count entered it, and immediately attacked the troops of Piccinino, who, intent upon plunder, little expected the assault.

They were easily beaten and put to flight: the multitude of fugitives broke down the bridge upon the Adige,

\* It is said that he was saved by a German soldier's sack boy, carried upon his shoulders in a sack. Capp. Comm. The panegyrist of Piccinino, Lorenzo Spiriti, the Perugian, in the poem entitled the New Mars, lib. 2.

Fecesi dentro un sacco per uom morto  
La notte trarre fuor molto nascoso  
Portato di lontan perfino al porto.

“ He caused himself to be carried out in a sack, very secretly in the night, as a dead man, so far even as the port.”

with the greatest loss to the enemy ; and thus Verona was lost and regained \* with equal celerity.

The Florentine outlaws hung around the Duke of Milan, soliciting him to make more active efforts against the Florentine republic, in order to oblige her to a separation from the Venetian, and promising them the assistance of their favourites. Piccinino was commanded to pass into Tuscany ; this arrival gave cause of inquietude to the Florentines, and they would have wished that Sforza returned to Lombardy in their defence as he himself desired ; but the Venetians prevailed sufficiently to prevent him. They had, indeed, the support of the pontifical army, but the pope could dispose of his forces still less than Vitelleschi, Cardinal Bishop of Florence, and Patriarch of Alexandria, to whom the pope had intrusted the political and military government of his states. This man both used and abused it ; he was an enemy of the ruling party in Florence, who had deceived him when Albizzi was driven from it. He was suspected of holding a secret intelligence with the Duke of Milan, and some letters written to Piccinino being intercepted, confirmed the suspicion. The pope secretly ordered the commandant of Castel San Angelo, to discover some manner of arresting him, and cause the process to be made against him. Whilst he was coming to the gate of the castle, in order to speak to the castellan, he was surrounded by soldiers, and his arrest was announced to him ; placing his hand upon his sword, he attempted to defend himself, but was badly wounded, taken, and conducted into the castle, where he died, either from wounds he had received, or from poison †. The Florentines took

\* Pogg. Hist. lib. 6. Sanut. Ist. Ven. Capp. Comm.

† Ammirato writes, that in dressing a wound in the head, Lucas

courage at this event. Piccinino attempted to enter Tuscany by the Alps of St. Benedict, and the valley of Montone; but the passage was bravely contested with him by Nicholas of Pisa, an officer of the Florentines. He directed his attention towards Marradi, which was defended by Bartholomew Orlandini, the Florentine; and although the difficulty to be surmounted was alike on both sides, the courage displayed by the commandant was very different, who, abandoning his post, meanly took to flight. Piccinino entering Tuscany by the Mugello, approached Florence without opposition, and extended his inroads even as far as Fiesole. No movement followed in the city, contrary to the expectations held out by the outlaws, although it was filled with terror, from many countrymen with their flocks and herds having taken refuge in it. It was feared that Piccinino would encamp between Prato and Florence, where he would not want provisions, and would have been enabled to prevent their transport from Pisa to Florence, at a time when there was a dearth of them; but he turned his attention towards the Casentino, upon the invitation, and under the favour, of the gentry of that district, and particularly of the Count Poppi. He captured little boroughs, but was constantly observed by the Florentine army, which, being inferior in number, dared not approach too near, in order not to be obliged to accept battle. But, considerable succours having arrived from the pontifical states and Lombardy, it was considered an action might be hazarded, which Piccinino greedily sought for, because, as he was re-called into Lombardy, it grieved him to leave it without any action of importance.

Pitti, with one blow, drove the probe forcibly into his brain, and thus killed him.—1st. lib. 21.

The Florentine army stood under Anghiari: the commanders thereof were Michelotto Attendolo and Orsino: Neri Capponi and Bernardetto de Medicis were the commissaries; and Piccinino was posted at San Sepolcro. He considered it possible to take the enemy unawares, knowing how disorderly they encamped, and hastened as to a certain victory. Perhaps the intention would have succeeded, had it not been for the activity evinced by Michelotto, who observing a cloud of dust from a hill, was aware of the approach and movements of the enemy, and caused the camp to beat immediately to arms. A battle was fought on the 29th of August, for many hours, at the foot of the ascent of Anghiari, and the people of Piccinino, who thought the victory easy, having met with so brave a resistance, were defeated. They turned their attention only to make prisoners, in order to gain the reward of ransom, the arms, horses and spoils; the slain in the battle were consequently very few\*, but a great number of prisoners were made, amongst whom were the principal generals in the army of the duke. Piccinino saved himself at Borgo with a thousand horse†: probably he might have been taken, if the troops of the confederacy had hastily pushed forward: but they were more concerned about the booty, which they first

\* Macchiavelli, who often laughs at the wars of those times, says, that one man only died, and this man was trod down by the horse. Biondo, a writer of those times, and secretary of the pope, counts 60 killed and 400 wounded of the army of Milan, and 200 wounded of that of the alliance, of whom ten died afterwards. Neri Capponi, who was present at it, says that 22 were taken, of 25 heads of squadron, and 5,000 horse, without saying any thing of the dead.—Comment.

† His grief at the loss afflicted him so much that he was about to thrust the sword into his body if his son had not prevented him.—Justin, Hist. Ven. lib. 8.

wished to lodge safely in Arezzo, than about honour. That general soon retreated, first towards Perugia, and afterwards towards Lombardy; and his favourers bore the penalty of the little faith they had shewn towards the Florentines. Amphrosina of Pietra Mala, mistress of Montedoglio, was deprived of her estates, and went a solitary refugee with her daughters, to beg their subsistence from the Duke of Milan.

Francis, of the family of the Counts Guidi, Lord of Poppi, for whom the Florentines had hitherto entertained such high regard, straitened by Neri Capponi, was obliged to abandon the seat of his family, possessed for so many ages. Common tradition relates him to have come into Italy with the Emperor Otho I; he had possessed a great part of the Casentino and many castles in the Vale of the Arno (*Val d'Arno*). Various individuals, celebrated for that ferocious valour and preponderance which characterized the feudal lords, rendered this family illustrious, and amongst the rest, the famous Count Guido Guerra. The Count Francis had been favoured with the Florentine friendship and protection, and particularly in the controversies held with the pope, and Vitelleschi\*; and in the present war had been created commissary of the republic in the Casentino. The greediness of making new conquests caused him to rebel inconsiderately, little thinking how difficult it was for the arms of Piccinino and the duke to overturn a republic which was so strong, and that, upon their departure, he would find himself exposed to the vengeance of the Florentines†. He had wished a few years before to marry

\* Capponi of the Expulsion of the Count Poppi.

† Here are the words of the count to Capponi: "Can it be that your gentlemen do not leave me this house, which, for nine hundred



a daughter to Peter de' Medicis, son of Cosmo; but the prudence of this man; his affectation of moderation, and republican equality, made him reject the offer, and this refusal probably disposed the count to rebellion. Cosmo wished rather to marry his son to a young lady of a family which was not wealthy, and who afterwards proved his riches, namely Lucrezia Tornabuoni, wise, pious, and versed in letters, whom he well knew to be best fitted to form the felicity of his house: and in fact to her Lorenzo is indebted for the first rudiments of his education, and imbibed, as it were with her, the love of learning\*. Besides Poppi, all the remainder of the Casentino possessed by those counts, fell into the power of the Florentines, together with Prato Vecchio, Battifolle and Mignario, Leonino, and other castles.

<sup>1441.</sup> Tuscany, now liberated from every fear, the theatre of war was confined to Lombardy, where the Duke, either from a frivolous disposition, or with his usual plan of fraud, talking of peace, and wishing to gain the good will of Count Sforza, again promised him his daughter in matrimony; and as the count, who had been so frequently deluded, would not believe him, he sent her to Ferrara, to the Marquis Nicholas, in order to get her married. But, by the usual instability of events, she was soon brought back to Milan, and the war was renewed in Lombardy, where no actions of any consequence occurred. The duke, however, who had so frequently both wished for, and been disinclined to peace, and the ma-

years was ours? for the rest do what you please." If this family had come into Italy with Otho I., he greatly exaggerated in speaking of the antiquity of his establishment at Poppi.

\* Capp. Commen. expulsion of the Count, Fabb. Vita Cosmi, note 73. Ammir. lib. 21. Macchiavel, Ist. l. 5.

trimony of his daughter, either finally annoyed by the war, or disgusted at the indiscreet demands made by his captains, (each of whom, seeing him without male issue, asked a city of him,) treated with the count and the Venetians, with so much seriousness, that he was believed to be in earnest. A compromise was made by all the parties interested in Count Sforza. He wished the matrimony to precede the treaty, in order to assure himself that the duke said it with a sincere intention. He actually sent the daughter to Cremona; a city promised in dowry, and there the nuptials were celebrated. She brought him that city and Pontremoli, together with the rights to the vast possessions of the father, which, in the hands of a leader of such valour, were an ample inheritance. The ambassadors of Venice, of Florence, the duke, the pope, &c., came to Cremona, where peace was confirmed, in which the mutual restitution of the places which had been lost was stipulated for\*.

Neri Capponi, in all the events we have detailed, had particularly distinguished himself. By the eloquence he employed in embassies, his dexterity in the management of affairs, by his skill and courage in arms, he usefully served his country; and, adding to his own services and the glory he had acquired, those of his father, was considered, after Cosmo, as the principal citizen in the state, not on account of the value of his riches and the party he followed, but by the universal consent of the admirers of his virtues. The soldiers of the republic, who had beheld him for so many years commissary of the armies, and knew how the citizens usually enriched themselves in such offices, admired his honourable

\* Capp. Comment. Sanut. Ist. Ven. Ammirato of the family of the counts, &c.

poverty. Such a man might indeed give umbrage to the head of the government, which was suspected, with a cruel system of policy, of endeavouring, by a tragic event, at once to humble the fame, and extinguish the authority, of Capponi. Baldaccio, of Anghiari, a brave captain, was, above all the soldiery, particularly well disposed towards him, and bore him the greatest affection. This man, going one day to the palace, to treat with the gonfaloniere Orlandini, was suddenly assailed by the guards, put to death, and thrown from the windows. This is said to have been a private revenge of the gonfaloniere, who had behaved himself cowardly when he commanded the Florentine forces opposed to Piccinino, and had been bitterly rebuked by Baldaccio. Others, as happens in violences which the government commits without any evident reason, imagined secret motives. Macchiavel, that most profound researcher into political secrets, perceived, in this action, that cruel species of refinement, which, in order to give acts of injustice a less atrocious colouring, confounds them with the obscure words, called state reason. Whoever ruled the government, the death of Baldaccio, not only took away a very powerful support from the power of Capponi, but, it appearing that he was put to death for affairs of government, suspicion was thrown also upon his friend and protector. The other motives adduced by Cambi and Nardi, and quoted by Ammirato, are too frivolous to induce the Florentine government impudently to commit so cruel an action: the first is the sacking of Sughereto, made by the soldiers of Baldaccio, the order for which, (says Cambi,) he attributed to the government. Whoever reads the histories of that time, knows that these blows were very easily pardoned in leaders, and if, by way of exception, the Florentine republic intended

to punish him for it, they would have formally entered a process against him, in order that such proceeding might be attributed to the error committed by Baldaccio. Nardi gives the motive for it, in a secret treaty made by Baldaccio, to go into the service of the pope against Sforza; but the pope was at that time a friend of the Florentines, as much as Sforza, nor would they have wanted a manner of retaining him, had they wished it\*. The opinion of Macchiavel, therefore, is the most probable, that Cosmo and his counsellors wished to get rid of him, and that they found an easy executioner in the cruel enemy of Baldaccio, the gonfaloniere Orlandini, who, without the tacit approbation of Cosmo, would not have boldly committed so enormous a crime†. In the mean time we may observe what degradation the Florentine people were suffering, who were insulted by the government with an atrocious execution, for which it condescended not to adduce the least motive, however false. The widow of the unfortunate Baldaccio, her only child being dead, built a convent, where she lived the rest of her days in company with other pious women. Her name of Anna Lena still belongs to the convent, and to a part of the city.

Italy would have been restored to tranquillity by the last peace, had not continual contests

\* In the chronology of Bologna, (Rer. Ital. tom. 18,) another reason is given for it: it is said, that Baldaccio had gone to Piombino, to take it away from the Lady Sovereign of Piombino: that the gentlemen reproaching him, he answered them proudly, &c. No Florentine historian, however, speaking of this fact, it must be considered as a vague report, having no foundation. The diversity of opinions upon this death confirms the opinions of Macchiavel. Ammirato, faithful to the family of the Medicis, is not of this opinion in his history, but adopts it in his portraits, written with more liberty.

† Macchi. Ist. lib. 6. Ammir. lib. 21.

about the disputed kingdom of Naples, and the instability and crooked policy of the Duke of Milan, kept the flame burning. Two pretendants to the crown of Naples, after the death of Jane, both of whom had been adopted by her as sons, aspired to that kingdom, viz., Regnier, of Angiers, and Alphonso, King of Arragon. For some time the forces of Alphonso prevailed, who kept his rival besieged in Naples. He demanded this aid from the Duke of Milan, who ordered Count Sforza, his son-in-law, to march to that enterprise. The count accepted it so much the more willingly, as his own interests were united therewith, in the defence of his states of the Marche, which were threatened by Alphonso. Whilst he is hastening there, the inconstant duke, gained by Alphonso, without changing the orders given to the count, singular at all times in his manner of acting, and still concealing, in his dark mind, suspicions against his son-in-law, because he knew not how to loosen himself from the tie of friendship with the Venetians and the Florentines, gave the pope to understand, that he could, if it pleased him, recover La Marche, and offered to him his forces commanded by Piccinino. The pope, discontented at the last peace, and enraged against Sforza, who had occupied so many of his towns, desired nothing more. Piccinino, feigning that he was dismissed from the service of the duke, marched towards La Marche, got possession of Todi, and was declared by the pope, gonfaloniere of the church. These movements obliged Sforza to stop in La Marche, and deprived Regnier of Angers of his succour\*. During the slow progress of the siege of Naples, two bricklayers pointed out to Alphonso a sub-

\* Simonett. De Gestis Sforzæ.

terraneous road, sewer, or aqueduct, the same by which Belisarius had formerly entered that city : it was shut by an iron bar, and a guard usually watched over it. This, however, was neglected at present, although a hint of the danger had been given in Naples. Alphonso, having opened that passage, caused a chosen body to enter it, and making a furious assault upon a part of the walls, distant from the sewer, in order to distract the enemy's force from it, the soldiers entered by the sewer, whilst the enemy's attention was diverted elsewhere, occupied a gate, and, introducing the remainder of their comrades, after an obstinate conflict, Alphonso made himself master of Naples, and obliged Regnier to take shelter in Castel Nuovo\*. Thence, having no hope of aid, he embarked upon two Genoese ships, and came to Florence to lay his grievances before the pope, who had prevented the succour arriving to him. The pontiff gave him, in consolation, the useless investiture of the kingdom; and with this vain title he returned disappointed to Provence. Alphonso, who, together with the arts of war, was alike well acquainted with that of conciliating minds, soon saw the whole kingdom subject to him, and founded therein a stable possession.

Count Sforza was now in difficult circumstances; he was alone against the forces of the Duke of Milan, commanded by Piccinino, united to those of the pope and the King of Naples, who, as a conqueror, would not have delayed attacking him. No one was on his side, and he alone received a supply of money from the

\* Read the Neapolitan Journals, *Rer. Ital.* tom. 21.; we shall see with what supine indifference the defence of the sewer was neglected, after the advices received.

Venetians, and the Florentines\*. Nevertheless, by his genius and valour, encamping upon the Picene territory, he straitened Piccinino in a manner, that he obliged him to come to an agreement. The rival leaders were twice pacified, since the war, apparently, was confined to them ; but the peace was only of a very few days' duration. The Florentines knew that if the count were oppressed, the arms of the duke, of the pope, and of the King of Naples would be turned against them ; but, tired out and oppressed by the expenses of so many wars, they were inimical to entering upon a new one. The pope, who saw the Florentine republic thwarting his designs, thought of leaving Florence, nor could he be detained there by the prayers of Cosmo and many respectable citizens. Whilst the Florentines were thus pending in uncertainty, they were brought to a determination by a new accident. The Bolognese had been irritated against Francis Piccinino, son of Nicholas, who had arrested Hannibal Bentivoglio, universally beloved, and had sent him into Lombardy. Hannibal fled, as it were, miraculously from prison, and, appearing suddenly in Bologna, which declared herself immediately in his favour, arrested Piccinino†. The Bolognese sent immediately for succour to Florence,

\* Simonett. De Gestis Sfor. lib. 6. The pope not only made peace with Alphonso, but gave him also the investiture of the kingdom, which, in this same year, he had given to Regnier : he, moreover, declared the bastard Ferdinand his successor. The king bound himself to expel Sforza from the ecclesiastical dominions, and restore them to the pope.

† See the singular manner in which Hannibal Bentivoglio was freed from the tower of Varano, by his friends ; the manner in which he arrived at Bologna ; how this place rebelled ; and what danger Piccinino ran, from being brought out upon the circle, and threatened, for a long time, to be thrown down.—Chronicle of Bologna.

praying to be received into the league. The Florentines having consulted the Venetians, found themselves of an accord with each other, and a general war began in Italy. In the mean time the King of Naples had united with Piccinino near Norcia, and, with an army of 24,000 fighting men, between infantry and cavalry, advanced towards Sforza, who, unable to confront them, did his best by skirmishing around the strong places, indulging his hopes in the near approach of the winter, and the departure of Alphonso, since, in a new dominion, absence is always dangerous. Having disposed his troops, with foresight and vigilance, in the cities capable of resistance, he stopped at Fano, which was defended by the sea and by a double ditch, hoping to maintain himself there, as the king was deficient in the machines necessary for a siege, if he had wished to undertake it. This campaign is a *chef d'œuvre* of skill in the military art of that great man, who found himself alone against the united forces of the Neapolitan kingdom, led on by a valorous king, united to those of the pope and the disciplined troops of Piccinino, the bravest of the generals educated in the school of Braccio, and the most worthy of fighting with him\*. So inferior in force, he lost various cities of the Marche, more from the treachery of his own people, than by hostile power. The king approached Fano, but dared not besiege it.

In the mean time the succour, given to the rebellious Bolognese, might have been taken by the Duke of Milan for an infraction of treaty. The Florentines, and the Venetians, consequently prepared themselves to maintain the war with him, but before beginning hostilities, they wished to sound his intention. He, however, con-

\* Simonett. De Ges. Sfor. lib.



stant alone in his volubility, had began to repent of having reduced his son-in-law to the danger of losing almost all his states, and not only confirmed the league, but sent ambassadors to King Alphonso, praying him to desist from hostilities against the count, which although the king refused, nevertheless, as the winter was approaching, he retired within his own kingdom. Piccinino remaining alone, and wishing to prevent the junction of the forces which the Florentines and the Venetians had finally sent to the succour of the count, was defeated between Pesaro and Rimini, and was in danger of being taken. Recalled, in the mean time, by the Duke<sup>1444.</sup> of Milan, who ordered him to desist from hostilities against the count, he obeyed; but left the command of the troops to Francis his son, who continued to act in favour of the pope. This young man found troops, in number far superior to those of the count; for the aid and the money of the King of Naples and the pope had placed them in this condition. The count saw the necessity of coming to a battle before the Neapolitan troops had joined him; and seizing the opportunity of the absence of Nicholas, attacked this corps near to Mount Elmo, completely defeated it, and took the son of Piccinino prisoner with 3,000 cavalry, the greater part of the captains of the pope, with Ronco, who was the first among them\*. The news of this ruin afflicted Nicholas Piccinino so greatly, that he fell sick, and soon died.

Piccinino was a leader who owed every thing to his merit, and nothing to his birth. Born in Perugia a common soldier of Braccio, he first began to distinguish himself in the war against the pope: at all times faithful

\* Simon, de Ges. Sfor. lib. 7. Chronicle of Bologna.

to his master and protector, he was the most illustrious man who sprang from that school, more brave than fortunate, and celebrated for rising again with greater vigour from his defeats. Had Count Sforza not existed, he would have been considered the first general of his age; but he had almost always to contend with this most terrible of enemies. His rival in activity, in celerity, he trusted more to fortune; whilst Sforza rarely hazarded a blow, without foreseeing its happy results\*. The duke was very much afflicted at his death, and having obtained the liberation of Francis, the son, from the count, he employed himself in promoting his interest, and that of his brother James. It was easy after this defeat, to make a peace between the count and the pope by the mediation of the Florentines and Venetians, leaving in the hands of the former all that he possessed. The King of Naples was not adverse to it.

Italy would now have drawn breath in the enjoyment of tranquillity and peace, had not the unquiet and  
 1445. unstable humour of the Duke of Milan prevented it. Hannibal Bentivoglio, who was beloved so much by the people, governed Bologna: after his family, the most powerful was that of Canedoli. Baldassar the head of it, seduced by the duke, who promised him assistance, stabbed Bentivoglio by an act of treachery, and ran through the city shouting out *The people for ever. (Viva il Popolo,)* who, however, rebelling against him and his party, assisted by the counsels, and by the arms of the Florentine and Venetian ambassador, cut the Canedoli in pieces with all their favourites; the succour from Milan of 1,500 horse, commanded by Furlano, either

\* Joann. Campani Bracchii Perusini Vita. Rer. Ital. tom. 19. Life of Nicholas Piccinino of Candido Decembrio. Rer. Ital. tom. 20.

arrived too late, or, hearing of the disposition of the Bolognese, dared not make any other attempt\*. The duke would not stop at this, and looking upon his son-in-law with a suspicious eye, not content with having obtained from him the liberation of the son of Piccinino, endeavoured to seduce from allegiance to him the most valiant captain he possessed, called Ciarpellone. This conspiracy was not unknown to Sforza: the defection of Ciarpellone was very dangerous to him, because he was both privy to his secrets and a powerful support in arms; having consequently arrested him from true or imaginary crimes, he ordered him to be hanged, and for a man like Ciarpellone, that punishment, indeed, could hardly be called an act of injustice†. The father-in-law was highly offended, and instigating the pope, the King of Naples, Sigismund Malatesta, and other princes, against him, kindled the flames of another dangerous war. The Venetians and the Florentines, perpetual enemies of the duke, became now the support of Sforza, who came to Florence in the winter to concert his operations; 60,000 florins were assigned to him until the middle of May by the Florentines, and the same by the Venetians‡.

\* Cron. di Bologna. Neri. Capp. Comm., &c.

† He was a brave man, but a most infamous one; a single trait alone, amidst so many, will suffice to depict him. Francis Piccinino had been betrayed and made a prisoner by a soldier called Colella, and brought to Ciarpellone. The Count Francis had given the soldier the sum of 400 florins, depositing them with a banker of Fermo. Ciarpellone, in order to gain them, caused the remains of the enemy's troops secretly to understand, that a small body would go out to make booty in an indicated place; in that he placed Colella, who being taken paid dear for his treachery. Ciarpellone, announcing to the count the fact of this unhappy man, demanded and obtained the money already given to him.—Simon. de Ges. Sfor. lib. 7.

‡ Neri. Capp. Comm.

1446. Cosmode Medicis instigated him to attempt a daring blow, and march through Umbria to Rome, where he would find favourers every where around him; that Jacob and Andrew would open the gates of Todi to him as soon as they saw his banners displayed before it; Orvieto, Narni, would do the same, supplying him with provisions; that, arriving in sight of Rome, the Cardinal Campano, with his party, to whom the government of Pope Eugene and the Patriarch Lewis was most odious, would excite the people to revolt. The count, if we are to give any credit to his historian Simonetta, approved not the idea of Cosmo, and found the greatest difficulties in the execution; wherefore Jerome Lando, in the name of Cosmo, and of Orsatto Justiniano, the Venetian ambassador, were sent to urge him to the determination. The counsels of peaceable statesmen, who wish to direct the operations of great warriors, are, for the most part, very dangerous. Count Francis was obliged to obey his paymasters: having undertaken the march, he found resistance on every side: Todi, Orvieto, and all the other cities, not only opened not their gates to him, but treated him as an enemy. His army was in the greatest want of provisions; and nothing short of the ardent affection alone that the soldiers entertained for the count, had the effect of keeping them from mutiny. After a long and painful march, he was obliged to retreat upon the Siennese territory, where he first got provisions, and thence by the mount Pulciano, the lake of Trasimenus, Gubbio, re-passing the Apennines, he arrived at Fano, with but little glory, or rather entirely shorn of it\*.

During this useless expedition, the urgencies of the pope had caused King Alphonso to march towards La

\* Simonetta. de Ges. Sfor. lib. 8.

Marche; whilst the pontifical troops, and those of the Duke of Milan, far superior to the forces of the count, threatened his dominions on the other side. To these misfortunes may be added the defection of his brother Alexander, who thinking the affairs become desperate, entered into a compact with the enemy, and consigned to them Pesaro, a city intrusted to his protection by his brother. Whilst he was thus losing all his territory of La Marche, his cruel and extravagant father-in-law endeavoured to wrest from him even Cremona and Pontremoli, the dowry of his daughter; but the latter city was defended by the Florentines, the former by the Venetians, who having hitherto temporized, began to make war upon the duke more openly, who, in the mean time, was approaching his end, tormented by mistrust of himself, and a consciousness of his own crimes.

Some of his captains had abandoned him, whilst others, being suspected, were imprisoned by him, and put to death, which greatly weakened his troops. But the heaviest misfortune was brought upon him by Michael Attendolo, commander of the Venetian army. Piccinino, with the people of the duke, after the useless attempt upon Cremona, had retreated to Cazalmajore, established a bridge upon the Po, and fortified his army in a little island of that river. The head of the bridge, by which alone the forces of the duke could be attacked, was so well defended by trenches, it was impossible to gain it: Michael at this moment, perceiving that the Po was fordable as far as the island, made his cavalry and infantry in a group enter the river, and attack the Milanese camp in the island on the flank, where, thinking themselves well defended by the river, they were badly fortified. The unexpected daring of the enemy, and an attack on the point considered the most secure, are wont

to disorder, and strike any enemy with panic; the troops of the duke experienced a complete defeat; the bridge was broken down on the other side of the Po, in order to secure the remains of the army, and innumerable prisoners were made\*. The duke, in vain, sued for peace: the Venetian army, after recovering many places, passed the Adda again, routed the ducal troops, and advanced upon the Milanese. The duke, reduced to this sad condition, had no other resource than his son-in-law, who had been so often ill treated. He was the greatest warrior of his age, and if the duke had known how to make a proper use of him, he would have proved the terror of his enemies; but the latter probably dreading the junction had always contrived to prevent it by secret stratagems.

The count was not averse to this invitation; but seeing his affairs ruined in La Marche, looked with a greedy eye upon the succession to the states of Milan. The Venetians perceived this; and fearing what might result from it, in order to begin the war with advantage with the successor, endeavoured to make themselves Masters of Verona, but in vain. They caused fresh suspicions to arise in the mind of the duke, whereby retarding the arrival of the count, they were enabled to make greater progress, and push themselves forward even under the walls of Milan.

But the scene of the dissimulations, frauds and inconsistencies, carried on by this singular man, was now drawing near to a close. His advanced age, joined to his present disasters, put an end to his life. He wished, however, to preserve his character down to the last scene of the drama. Whilst he was hastening his son-in-law, by entreaties, to

\* Simonett. de Gestis, Sfor. lib. 8. This important fact happened about the end of September, or the beginning of October.

come to his succour, and promising him the succession, to which he and his little son had so just a pretension, he left King Alphonso heir to his estates, who, indeed, had always maintained an ascendancy over him. His character is sufficiently delineated by the actions we have described : suspicion and instability formed its foundation ; without the talents of his father, he inherited only his vices and defects, in a greater degree.

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## CHAPTER IV.

POLITICS OF FRANCIS SFORZA.—ELECTION OF THE PONTIFF NICHOLAS V.—ALPHONSO MARCHES TOWARDS TUSCANY.—ARMAMENTS OF THE FLORENTINES.—VICTORIES OF FRANCIS SFORZA OVER THE VENETIANS.—HE GETS POSSESSION OF MILAN, AND IS DECLARED LORD THEREOF.—SOLEMN EMBASSY SENT TO HIM BY THE FLORENTINES.—NEW WAR OF THE VENETIANS AND THE KING OF NAPLES, AGAINST THE FLORENTINES AND THE DUKE OF MILAN.—ARRIVAL OF THE EMPEROR IN ITALY.—TAKES THE CROWN AT ROME.—CONSPIRACY OF PORCARO AGAINST POPE NICHOLAS V.—CHARACTER OF MAHOMET II.—EXTRAORDINARY TACTS IN THE SIEGE OF CONSTANTINOPLE.—PEACE AND LEAGUE BETWEEN THE ITALIAN POWERS.—DEATH OF NICHOLAS V.—ELECTION OF CALISTUS III.

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**T**HE death of the Duke of Milan caused a change in the political views of the Italian powers, and particularly in the Florentine republic, which, hitherto, an enemy of the dukes, became now their friend. Count Francis, when he received news of this, was at Cutignola. The succession to the duke belonged to him, but his affairs in that dukedom could not be in greater difficulty. The Venetians were in arms, and had half conquered it; King Alphonso pretended to it, and his officers had already taken possession of the castle and the little tower; Charles, Duke of Orleans, made pretensions to it, on account of Valentine Visconti, from whom he descended; and to complete the whole, the Milanese people had proclaimed their own



liberty, and were preparing to constitute themselves into a republic. In the mean time of the other cities subject to the duke, which had thrown off the yoke of the Milanese, some had set themselves at liberty, and others surrendered to the Venetians: amongst the former were Parma and Pavia, amongst the second, Lodi and Plaisance; and the Venetians, thinking themselves mistresses of all Lombardy, received the ambassadors sent by the Milanese with derision. In the midst of this confusion, the count, who united the talents of a warrior with the wisdom of a politician, disdained not to accept from the Milanese, whom he might have looked upon as his subjects, the command of general, foreseeing that a better opportunity would present itself for him to make good his rights; and, arriving in Lombardy, he united under his standard many of the most distinguished leaders, amongst whom were two sons of Piccinino, and Bartholomew Colleone. Pavia, in the mean time, gave herself up privately to him, and he assumed the title of count of this city\*.

The Florentines were still allied with the Venetians, but affairs had greatly changed aspect. Cosmo and the principal persons of the government favoured the count, it not pleasing them that the Venetians, by the acquisition of all Lombardy, should become the despots of Italy. Neri Capponi, remembering what dangerous enemies the lords of the Milanese had always been to the Florentine republic, liked not that either the count or the Venetians should be supported, but rather that powerful assistance should be afforded to the Milanese republic, thinking that a free government would be more favourable to the Florentines, than any other. His opinion was the wisest; but it was

\* Simonett. De Ges. Sforz. lib. 8.

easy to foresee that, the count being excluded from it, that rising republic, weak and ill-united, would soon fall into the power of the Venetians\*. The counsel of Cosmo was followed, who advised that the most vigorous succour should be given to the count, particularly in money, who to this aid owed, in great part, the acquisition of that principality.

The death of the duke had been preceded by that of Eugene IV., and Thomas of Sarzana, or of Pisa, had been elected, by the name of Nicholas V., a man of very humble birth, but possessed of great virtues and learning. Florence had already known him as the instructor of the sons of Rinaldo Albizzi, and Cosmo had employed him as amanuensis and director of the library of St. Mark†. Archbishop of Bologna no earlier than the year before, he had been created cardinal. He wished to give peace to Italy; but the threads of negotiation were too intricate. The Florentines studied every means to make him their friend, particularly dreading Alphonso, King of Naples, who, possessed of activity and courage, and being a favourite of fortune, was aspiring to the states of Milan, and probably to the whole kingdom of Italy. Alphonzo threatened Tuscany and the Florentines, because they were allies of the Venetians; and every negotiation for an accommodation proved fruitless. The king insisted upon their making a league with him, and abandoning the Venetians; the Florentines would not agree to this, because they perceived dangerous views in the king, who, united with Tuscany, might rapidly dash forward with powerful forces into Lombardy, maintain his pretensions to the Milanese, which

\* Michaelis Bruti, Hist. lib. 1.

† Mehus. Vita Ambros. Camal. præf.

would easily be swallowed up, whilst the Florentines would derive no other advantage, than that of being his last mouthful. It became, therefore, necessary for the republic to place herself in a warlike attitude, by creating the ten councillors of war, and collecting numerous troops.

The king came upon the Siennese territory; but, although he was supplied with provisions by the people, no commotion took place in the city. His army was composed of 15,000 men, amongst whom were 7,000 horse; but, not venturing to penetrate into the heart of Tuscany, he scoured the sea-coast, the Volterranean and the Pisan territory; and, favoured by Count Fazio Gherardesca, occupied many castles, and pitched his camp in vain at Campiglia. His captain, Simonetta,<sup>1448.</sup> was more successful in occupying Castiglione Pescaja, and the Rocca. The winter approaching, the king retreated into the patrimony of St. Peter, whilst the Florentine Commissaries, Neri Capponi and Bernardetto de Medicis, regained many of the castles along the Pisan sea-coast\*. The Florentines, however, expecting fresh attacks in the spring, turned their attention to make better preparations, by taking into their service the generals Frederick, Count of Urbino, and Gismonda Malatesta, who were not great friends to each other, but were united by the prudence and sagacity displayed by Capponi. The army commanded by these two captains, and by Capponi and Bernardetto de Medicis, the commissaries, collected at Spedaletto, about 10,000 men strong. The king had threatened Piombino, which was held by Rinaldo Orsino, who had married the only surviving female of the family of Appiano. The defence of that place was of great importance, since, if Alphonso

\* Neri Capponi Comm. Amm. lib. 22.

occupied it, his expulsion would not be very easy, as he could have well provided it with men and provisions by sea : every disposition was, therefore, made to maintain it. Rinaldo could receive no assistance by land, as the king had fortified all the passes which led to it. The troops, with their arms, were embarked upon four great galleys, and arrived safely at Piombino. The Florentines, who were accustomed to get rid of all troublesome affairs by means of money, would have arranged even this, by paying the king 50,000 ducats which he demanded, and leaving him at liberty to act against Piombino. The most general opinion was, that the offer should be accepted; but Capponi opposed it by pointing out to his fellow-citizens, besides the meanness of the bargain itself, the danger of leaving that King a stable footing in Tuscany, adding, that he would shortly be under the necessity of retreating. The Florentine camp, inferior in number, was pitched upon certain little hills about a mile round Campiglia, and was waiting for succours; it was deficient in many articles of provisions, and particularly wine, a dangerous deficiency in a place surrounded by bad water: provisions had been sent by sea, but the little Florentine fleet met, in the canal of Piombino, with that of the king, which was so much superior, and was attacked in sight of the two armies, night concealing the issue of the contest, which was unfavourable to the Florentines, who lost two of their largest galleys. The want of provisions obliged the Florentines to retreat towards Mount Scudaio, which was easily retaken, as well as the other castles which were in the power of the king.

Piombino had hitherto offered a valiant opposition to the arms and the stratagems of Alphonso, who, seeing himself constrained, by the disease and the heat of the

season, to abandon the siege, wished to try the last blow by a ferocious assault, on the 8th of September. Rarely, in the little wars of those times, has a battle been fought with so much animosity. Alphonso, a king of so great a name and valour, was ashamed of retreating, after a long siege, with the loss of so many of his men; wherefore he encouraged his officers and soldiers with the greatest allurements to conquer the place, whilst, on the other hand, the people of Piombino foresaw that, in case of being conquered, they would be exposed to fire and sword. Often were the Arragonese mounted on the walls, and bravely repulsed; the women even hastened to the defence; after a long contest, the issue still remained undecided, when Alphonso was advised of the approach of the enemy's cavalry. This information led him to desist from the attack, fearing that he would be surrounded by the whole Florentine army. The cavalry, however, were only a small body; but the king, not considering it his duty to renew the attack, took his road to the sea-coast, and returned to his kingdom. Thus the Florentine republic had the glory of having forced a brave and powerful king to retreat from their states with an army very considerable for those times\*.

In the mean time, the valour displayed by Count Sforza, gave a different aspect to the affairs of Lombardy. Last year, in spite of every resistance made by the Venetian arms, he had taken Plaisance by assault, giving the greatest proofs of his personal valour in the midst of showers of ball and grape-shot, and had his horse slain under him. That unhappy city was taken and sacked, since the valour or the cupidity of the soldiers increased with the hope of their barbarous success; not

\* Neri Capp. *Commen. Ammir. lib. 22.*

even the monasteries were spared ; 20,000 citizens were taken, and, according to the cruel custom of those times, were obliged to ransom themselves. All the garrison, together with the Venetian purveyor, Gerard Dandolo, having retired in vain into the citadel, were obliged to capitulate for want of provisions\*. This victory proved to the Venetians how affairs were changed by the change of one man alone, and that the acquisition of the Milanese state would not be so easy an enterprise. They had recourse to the Florentines, urging them to carry on the war with them against the count, as they had formerly done against the duke : but circumstances were now changed, and the Florentines were rather willing that the count should make himself master of Milan, than the power of the Venetian republic be too much augmented : nevertheless, in order to save appearances, they sent them some aid, as they were bound to do by agreement.

The Venetians, thus seeing the open war with the count become so difficult, began to carry it on secretly against him, by seducing various of his generals ; as Bartholomew Colleone and the sons of Nicholas Piccinino, and made him suspected by the Milanese. He, however, extricated himself from every difficulty, by the valour he always evinced, and the fresh victories he gained ; one of the most memorable of which took place at Casalmaggiore upon the Po, where he destroyed the Venetian fleet in face of the land army which dared not stir. The fleet was surrounded on both sides, and annoyed by

\* Simon, Vita Sforz. lib. 10. Rivalta, Cron. Piacen. Rer. Ital. tom. 20. The same Anthony Rivalta, the author, was taken, but set at liberty, without paying any ransom to the captain of the galleons, Philip Eustachi : his sons fled from the hands of Scaramuzzetta.

the cannon planted on the banks of the river. Quirino, who commanded it, despairing of succour, saved himself by hastily disembarking men and implements at Casale, and setting fire to the fleet, which consisted of not less than seven hundred boats\*. This celebrated victory awakened the envy, rather than the admiration, of the rivals of the count, and the jealousy of the Milanese, who saw their general continually increasing in power, and quietly threatening the new-born liberty of their country, to which he had an hereditary right. In reward for his achievements, the supreme power which he held over the troops was limited, and he was obliged to await commands upon all the operations which were to be undertaken. He had views of invading the Brescian territory, but was obliged to undertake the siege of Caravaggio. He obeyed; not, however, without complaining of the bad treatment he received. Caravaggio, being straightened, was succoured by a powerful Venetian army of about 24,000 men, 12,000 of which were cavalry†. The Venetians, after various skirmishes, suddenly attacked the count, or rather surprised him, and penetrated even to his camp. There were not a few enemies in his army, who chose not to second him; he nevertheless re-organized his men, who were flying, with the greatest presence of mind and valour. The battle

\* At the time that it begun to burn, the soldiers of the count ran greedily upon the ships for prey, and were entirely discomfited. If the land army had profited of the moment, it might have given the count the most terrible defeat, as not a third of his people had remained with him. Seeing it useless to recall them, he caused the flames to be redoubled in the abandoned ships, and the soldiers were obliged to return to their posts.

† Soldo Istoria Bresciana. Simonetta makes it less.

was long and doubtful, but the issue proved glorious for the count. The Venetians experienced one of the most fatal defeats, with the loss of so many men made prisoners, that many were set at liberty by the prudence of the captain, in order that their number might not be superior to that of his own troops. The booty was immense: almost all the cavalry were prisoners, together with the Venetian purveyors, Donato and Dandolo, the same who had been already taken at Plaisance. The fruit of this victory, was the capture of Caravaggio and of the Brescian and Bergamascan territories, and of almost all the places, the keys of which were carried away by the count.

The Venetians, now panic-struck, and humbled by so many defeats, saw that it was necessary to change their system; and either really desired peace, or feigned they were anxious for it. The count readily agreed to it, as he saw suspicions and dissensions increase among the

<sup>1449.</sup> Milanese. The agreement was, that, by restoring to the Venetians every thing they had lost in this campaign, together with the prisoners, and ceding Crema, the republic should join the count, and aid him in conquering the Milanese, of which he was to become master. The sudden change must have been suspicious. The count refused it not, seeing the great party against him in Milan, who, confiding in their valour and good fortune, were ready to take any measures that circumstances would offer them. He was also greatly assisted in money by the Florentine republic, and privately by Cosmo. He had already taken Parma, Lodi, and all the places of the Milanese; when the Venetians, who had only agreed with him in order to detach him from the Milanese, and bring him again in contact with them,



joining the Milanese, intimated to him to desist from hostilities. This disheartened not the count, who, without paying attention to them, followed it up with so much celerity and vigour that, being the conqueror in every rencontre, he blocked up Milan, and reduced the inhabitants of this populous city to great distress from famine. The Milanese at last rebelling against the party, contrary to the count, and after having cut to pieces Veniero the Venetian ambassador, who endeavoured to restrain them, opened the gates to the count, who, being proclaimed by the assembled multitude, Duke of Milan, immediately ordered abundant provisions to be dispersed amongst the famished crowd, and, in a few days, all the cities and places belonging to the Milanese republic, fell into his hands\*. The joy of the Florentines was great in seeing a sovereign who had been always their friend, and, as it were fellow-citizen, succeed to that powerful dominion, governed too long by a house their capital enemy. They foresaw that a man of so much prudence and valour would be a constant friend of the republic, from which he had nothing to fear, in order to oppose the Venetians by her aid whenever it became necessary to curb the excessive power of the latter in Italy; that an uniform and wise plan would now succeed to the irregular and strange system of politics, pursued by his predecessor; and that this event was one of the most salutary to them, as well as to the safety of the other Italian governments. A solemn embassy was sent to him, composed of four of the principal citizens, honoured by the presence of Peter de' Medicis, son of Cosmo, and still more by Neri Capponi, the first statesman in the Florentine republic.

\* Simonett. de Gestis Sfort. lib. 21. Bonincon. Ann. Miniaten.

Greatly as the Florentines and the duke were satisfied at this event, so much the more it irritated the Venetian republic and Alphonso. Both the latter powers wished to swallow up the states of Milan; they knew that the assistance, particularly in the money from the Florentines, had furnished the means to Francis Sforza to make himself master of them; and great as would have been the

animosity, with which the war would have taken  
<sup>1451.</sup> place between them, if the Duke and the Florentines had been removed, with so much the more they prepared to wage it now with the former, by making a confederacy amongst themselves. One year followed of repose rather than of peace, in order to prepare themselves for fresh hostilities; both powers then began by the expulsion of the Florentines from the Venetian and Neapolitan dominions. The Venetians made the greatest preparations, adapted to the power of so great a republic, commencing the war against the duke. The

miserable Greek Emperor, who was about falling,  
<sup>1452.</sup> and who implored succour amidst the distress of his situation, received no other concession than a part of the ecclesiastical revenue\*. The Venetians, in order to molest the Florentines more at their own doors on one side, made a league with the Siennese, and on the other endeavoured to effect one with the Bolognese; but they succeeded not in the latter from the influence of Santi Bentivoglio, who preserved Bologna in alliance with the Florentines. This man, an illegitimate son of Hercules Bentivoglio, born at Poppi†, and brought up in Florence

\* Sanuto, Lives of the Doges of Venice.

† Hercules Bentivoglio had him from the wife of Agnolo of Cascese, of whom Santi passed always for the son, and, after his death, for the nephew of Anthony, brother of Angela, following whose condition of life, he was educated to the trade of wool. After the murder

to the cloth trade, by a kind of veneration that Bologna entertained for his name, was requested to come to that city, was richly provided for, and placed at the head of the government. Nor did he shew himself unworthy of the confidence the Bolognese reposed in him. Besides, his wisdom and modesty, virtues which perhaps were to be attributed to the humble life he had led for a considerable time, he evinced also courage and valour when they became necessary, as in the present instance. The Venetians, wishing to change the state, in order to bring over Bologna from the Florentines, caused the outlaws to be introduced at night through the common sewers, who raised a great clamour. But Santi, undaunted at the misfortunes of his house; placing himself at the head of his friends, fought valiantly, and repulsed the rebels. The great rage of the Venetians against the duke, caused the report to be spread that they were attempting his life, both by sword and poison \*. In order to injure the Florentines in every possible manner, they endeavoured, but in vain, to get them excluded from the commerce of Constantinople and of Ragusa. They had already made a league with the Siennese: on the other side, the King of Naples, who felt shame at having been obliged to leave Tuscany with a powerful army, prepared for revenge. Dispositions, therefore, were taken in Florence for the

of Hannibal Bentivoglio, there remaining only a little boy, unable to sustain the weight of the faction, the count of Poppi, who was at Bologna, participator of the secret of the birth of Santi, unveiled it to the Bolognese, who wished to have him. The young man remained doubtful whether it was fit for him to change condition, and consulted Cosmo upon it: but was persuaded to it by Neri Capponi, who recounts the fact at length in the commentaries.

\* Neri Capponi, Comment., relates, that this was attempted twice, but the poison probably to be put in the fire, which killed every one in the room, is a fable.

war: the ten councillors were created, Simonetta taken into pay as captain-general, and a league made for ten years with Duke Sforza, on whom the greatest reliance was placed.

Whilst hostilities were thus about to commence, Frederick III. of Austria, King of the Romans, who was going to be crowned in Rome, peaceably demanded a passage through Tuscany and Florence. He was honourably received first at Scarperia, where the first citizens went to meet him; afterwards at the Uccellatojo by sixty young men on horseback pompously dressed; and, finally, by the magistrates, and conducted to Santa Maria del Fiore, thence to a lodging at Santa Maria Novella. Two very celebrated men performed the compliments on this occasion; Charles Marsuppini for the republic, who was replied to by the secretary of the emperor, Æneas Piccolomini. After a sojourn of one day, he departed for Rome. In Sienna he was joined by Eleonora, daughter of the King of Portugal, with whom he had entered into a matrimonial contract\*: she had disembarked at Porto Pisano, and was received with similar splendour. They were both crowned at Rome. At their passage back through Italy, the same honours were paid them, and particularly at Ferrara by the Duke Borso, so celebrated for his splendour, who was created

\* Allegretto Allegr. Diario. delle Cose Sanese Rer. Ital. tom. 23.; relates on the 24th February, Madonna Dianora, the empress entered Sienna: the first time they saw each other was at Camollia upon the Prato, where they touched each other's hands, embraced and kissed each other, and in remembrance of these events, the government of Sienna caused a column of marble to be erected in that place, with the arms of the emperor, and of the King of Portugal engraved thereon, and on the reverse side, letters containing the above-mentioned event.

by the emperor, Duke of Modena, Reggio, and Count of Rovigo and Conacchio\*. After the departure of the emperor, hostilities began in Lombardy, and in Tuscany, but the actions were of no importance.

The army of the Venetians, after having been in front of that of the duke upon the Brescian territory, although battle was offered them, retreated†. The Neapolitan troops had already marched against Tuscany. That king had sent Ferdinand, his son, Duke of Calabria, with 8,000 horse, and 4,000 foot, accompanied by many excellent generals. This army entered Tuscany by the road of Perugia, and after sacking the district of Cortona, encamped at Fojano. The Florentine army, under the command of Simonetta and Astorre; took up a position in observation of the enemy. Foiano was contended for by the Neapolitans for more than a month, and not receiving succour, was obliged to surrender after forty-three days' siege, the long duration of which gave opportunity to the Florentines to place other towns in a better state of defence, and to increase the army, having taken other captains into their pay, and amongst the rest, Michael of Cutignola and Sigismond Malatesta, to whom they gave the supreme command.

The captains had orders to carry on the campaign cautiously without coming to a general engagement, which would be so dangerous to the state. The Neapolitan army remained forty-four days around Castellina, without being able to take it‡, nor having performed any

\* Æneas Silvius, Ist. Aust.

† Sanuto thinks there was a battle near the Oglio, and that he was separated by the night.

‡ It appears that they had only one large mortar to batter the walls, which being spoilt they had no other method of opening the breach.—Capp. Comm.

other enterprise of consequence, the winter approaching, they retired to the sea coast. A fresh troop, however, coming to Vada by sea, by the treachery of Rosso Attavanti, who commanded, got possession of that important post. The troops, nevertheless, collected themselves peaceably in winter quarters. In Lombardy, the  
1453. new Duke of Milan had many difficulties to overcome, in order to oppose the Venetians. A young prince of states, which were ill united, and greatly exhausted by a long war, he found himself in contest with a powerful republic, where commerce collected the greater part of the riches of Europe, and which, with little provisions and the mere revenues of the state, could sustain long and expensive wars. Another enemy, William of Monferrato combined to place the duke in greater embarrassment. He was encouraged by the Venetians, and aided with money by King Alphonso, entering the district of Alessandria with 4,000 horse and 2,000 infantry. He was attacked by Sacramoro, general of the duke, and was soon defeated\*. The forces of the Florentines were yet unequal to those of a valiant king, who disposed with absolute authority of the riches and power of vast kingdoms. They consequently sought aid elsewhere, by exciting against Alphonso a rival to the kingdom of Naples, Regnier of Angiers, and of Lorrain. He marched with his son by the impulse of Charles VII., King of France, to whom the Florentines had recourse by means of Angiolo Acciajoli and Francis Venturi: and passing into Italy, after many difficulties, the only advantage that accrued to the party, who had called him there, was to pacify William of Monferrato with the Duke of Milan. He might have been a formidable

\* Simon. de Gest. Sforz. lib. 21.

enemy to Alphonso, since the hope of a new government excites great partisans, and the old one has always numerous enemies. But his forces were inadequate to so great an enterprise; advanced age is incapable of activity and vigour, and is not supported by hope, which is usually the daughter of a youthful fancy. Regnier soon wished to return to France; he left, however, his son John, whom the Florentines wished for their general, since by bearing the title of Duke of Calabria, he held the sovereigns of Naples in some subjection. The army of the latter, however, in Tuscany was growing weaker, whence the Florentines were able to regain Foiano, Vada, and other castles which had been lost\*.

The good pontiff Nicholas, void of ambitious views, and full of true zeal, sincerely preached peace, by pointing out to the European princes an object more worthy of their valour, namely, the succour of the Greek emperor, who was about to fall under the sword of the Ottoman conquerors. Few pontiffs have equalled him in virtues: none have surpassed him in the love of letters, and in the premiums with which he has encouraged all who cultivated them. Nevertheless, he found himself exposed to a conspiracy from a man, who wished to take from him his temporal kingdom, not from any enmity he bore towards him, but in order to re-establish the ancient liberty. Stephen Porcaro, of noble birth, without the talents of the Tribune Rienzi, possessed the same ardour for liberty, in circumstances, however, very different; since, although the same disorders existed in Rome, there was at present a sovereign on that throne, armed with the executive power; wherefore the design became less necessary and more difficult. Never-

\* Capp. Comm. Sanuto, Lives of the Doges. Macchiav. Ist. lib. 6. Ammir. lib. 22.

theless, the continual view of the injustice, the excesses of the powerful, of the dissolute habits of the clergy, and the verses of Petrarch\*, which he thought addressed to him in a prophetic spirit, induced Porcara to undertake this chimerical enterprise. His first attempt was made at the funeral of Eugene IV., where he harangued the assembled multitude, invoking them to assert their liberty; but the people were not to be roused. This action, indeed, was a state crime; but the Pontiff Nicholas chose rather to pardon him, nay, to make him his friend. Fanaticism, however, never expired in the heart of Stephen, and, with the same imprudence, he again erected himself into an apostle of liberty, at the games held in the square, called Navona, and excited slight tumults. The good pontiff, nevertheless, who had compassion upon his folly, treated him not with rigour, and it was thought sufficient to banish him to Bologna, with the obligation of presenting himself once a day to the governor of that city. Stephen, however, was not disarmed by these acts of clemency. From Bologna he plotted a better-concerted enterprise. His nephew, an active and daring young man, associated, in Rome, three hundred soldiers and four hundred exiles with his designs, who were accustomed to disasters and dangers. In the night preceding the day destined for carrying the plan into execution, which was the Epiphany, the conspirators assembled at a banquet in the house of Stephen, who, escaping from Bologna, appeared suddenly before them in cardinal's clothes, encouraging them with his wonted

\* *Sopra il Monte Tarpeo, canzon, vedrai  
Un cavalier, che tutta Italia onora,  
Pensoso più d'altrui che di se stesso.*

“Upon the Tarpeian mountain, song, thou shalt see a Chevalier, whom all Italy does honour to, more thoughtful of others than of himself.”—See Macchiav. *Istor. lib. 6.*



eloquence, shewing them the facility of arresting the pope and cardinals on the following day, either in the square of St. Peter, or in the church; with these pledges make themselves masters of the government; and, besides their liberty, in order to animate these people by a more tangible reward, he promised them one million of ducats. Government, however, was already informed of their dangerous assembly. The house of Stephen was surrounded with an armed force: his nephew, with his sword in hand, cut his road courageously through the troops, but Stephen, taken prisoner, was hanged, with nine of his accomplices, who were considered either as martyrs, or fools, or as malefactors, according to the various political principles of writers\*.

Whilst old Rome was thus throwing out a passing spark of liberty, new Rome, or Constantinople, was falling under the yoke of the Ottomans. The blow had been suspended for some time, by the involuntary diversion made by the Tartars, who, as we have already mentioned, had given a terrible shock to the Ottoman empire: but this was only temporary, like a stormy blast, which, for a moment, bends down a strong tree, without tearing it up; when the wind is over, the tree raises itself again with greater vigour. So it happened to that empire. The despotism of this government possessed

\* Macchiavel, who, as a profound politician, judges of the frivolity of the enterprise of Porcaro: "Such an end had this design of his, and, indeed, his intention might be commended by some, but his judgment always blamed by every body." Infessura, notary of the Capitol: "That good man lost his life, a lover of the prosperity and liberty of Rome." Leon Batista Alberti: "*Facinus profecto quo, neque periculo horribilius, neque crudelitate tetrius, à perditissimo uspiam excogitatum.*" Muratori appears to find a greater crime on account of the person of the pope, than for the affair. *Annal. d' Ital.*

advantages which compensated for its evils. The perfect equality, or rather uniform slavery which prevailed, animated its subjects to distinguish themselves before the eyes of the sovereign: and, being all capable of holding the same employments, without privilege of birth, the greatest talents might be brought into activity when the sovereign was intelligent and active\*. As long as a succession of brave and warlike princes governed this empire, it was formidable: when they shut themselves up amidst the ease and indolence of the seraglio, and carried on war only by means of viziers, the government has continually become more enervated, nor does it appear, at present, remote from total dissolution. Mahomet II., a very young man, had succeeded to the empire. His father, Amurath, twice abdicated the kingdom, to retire into a devout solitude; and being recalled to it by the urgencies of the state, for which the too-tender age of his son appeared unequal, he had the greatness of mind, after having put the public affairs in order, to return gladly to his retirement; and was more commendable, perhaps, than a Charles V., an Amadeus, and other inconstant abdicators. His son had mounted the throne at the age of twenty-two years. He is celebrated as a great politician and a great warrior. Although, in his early youth, he was a bigot in religion, it has been believed that he had afterwards an equal contempt for all religions, and that, amongst a few friends, he treated his prophet as an impostor: he understood and spoke six languages, the Latin, the Arabic, the Chaldean, the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Persian, and he was fond of reading Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men. The christian literati disdained not to dedicate books to him, and the cele-

\* Gisleinii Busbequii Legat. Turci Epist.

brated Filelfo, by addressing a Latin ode to him, succeeded in liberating the mother of his wife from slavery. The generous treatment he offered Gentile Belmino, proves his taste for the fine arts. Such was the destroyer of the Greek empire. His armies were in the most flourishing condition, and in vain the weak Greek empire could hope to be saved from an ambitious young man, who knew no other law than that of his own will and his arms. Nevertheless, we must confess, that Constantinople made a greater resistance than could have been supposed, from the inequality of forces.

Some singular facts happened in this siege: the first is the use of an extraordinary piece of artillery, that threw balls of six hundred pounds weight\*; the other is the transport of the Ottoman ships across land, from the Bosphorus into the port of Constantinople, the mouth of which was blocked up by ships and innumerable chains: nor could victory be hoped for, without attacking the city on the interior side of the harbour. Where slaves abound, and where a smile or a frown of the master is decisive alike of fortune and of life, the most laborious enterprises are soon accomplished. A ditch was excavated, the sides of which were covered with slanted boards careened with fat, and eighty ships and brigantines, of fifty and thirty oars, were thus drawn through it in one night from the Bosphorus into the harbour†. This singular road

\* It has been thought a fable. Voltaire, *Istor. Gén.* cap. 91. There exists, however, a very large cannon at the entrance of the straits of the Dardanelles, which throws a ball of 1,100 pounds. An explosion was made of it, and its effects were very strong. De Tott. vol. 3.

† We have seen that a similar enterprise of the Venetians was much more troublesome. As it happened a few years before, it might have given courage to the imitation.

necessarily passed upon the suburb of Galata, inhabited by the Genoese, who might have forbidden it; but the fear of the conqueror, and the hope of his friendship, held them in a stupid neutrality. This operation was preparative to a final assault. Desperation so much animated the Greeks, that they fought as in the fine days of Rome, but the walls of Constantinople were finally subdued; her blood inundated her streets; and the body of the Emperor Constantine Palæologos, who was slain fighting valiantly, was found under a heap of dead\*. Mussulman avidity spared the lives of numbers, in order to reduce them to slavery. More than 60,000 Greeks met with this fate. The constancy and the valour with which this last defence was conducted, which almost wearied the obstinacy of the Ottomans, show that this important barrier of Europe might have been saved with a hundredth part of those endeavours which were once less usefully employed in the crusades. All the christian princes had been deaf to the voice of the Greeks, who implored succour. At the news of the deplorable event, they fell into consternation. The maritime powers, the Venetians, the Genoese, King Alphonso, were particularly accused of having neglected to succour them. All, however, shared the like penalty. In a short time the Genoese were driven from Galata†: the Venetians saw that formidable enemy approach, who afterwards despoiled them of their fairest provinces; and the kingdom of Naples was in danger of being invaded by the Conqueror of Constantinople. The good pontiff redoubled his entreaties, and used spiritual threats to unite the christian princes in a sacred league, and recon-

\* Phranza, Ducas, Chalcondilus, &c.

† See third essay in this volume.

quer the Greek provinces. But easy as it may be, by a slight endeavour, to preserve the bank of a torrent when still entire, by so much the more useless are efforts a hundred times greater to restore the torrent to its bed, when the bank is once broken down. The rebukes, however, of the pontiff, united to political  
1454. circumstances, disposed the princes to peace. The Duke of Milan wanted money. The Venetians feared the arms of Mahomet more than the threats of the pope, which were approaching their dominions, and peace between the duke and the Venetians was secretly treated for by the mediation of an Augustine monk. The duke acted honourably, and made the Florentines, his allies, privy to it; but the Venetians did not the same to King Alphonso, at which he was highly offended, and would, probably, have persisted in following up the war, had not imperious circumstances demanded peace. After much resistance, he, too, agreed, and Ferdinand, his son, departed, leaving Sienna free to the dominion over which he aspired. He would have easily occupied it, if the Florentines attacked that republic, as was the almost universal opinion, since she would then have thrown herself into the arms and protection of Ferdinand, which might have been the ruin of the Florentines, if the Neapolitan power gained so valuable an establishment, and one so near to them. Neri Capponi opposed the common sentiment, and fortunately his opinion against molesting the Siennese prevailed. Ferdinand, in departing, omitted not to let his avidity be seen, together with his bad disposition towards the prudence of the Florentines\*. An alliance was stipulated between the Venetians, the Florentines, and the duke, into which, after great hesita-

\* Capp. Com. Platina Vita Capp.

tion, and induced by the authority of the pope, Alphonso also entered, and even the pope himself, who, however, full of years, and borne down by troubles, soon quitted this life\*. Calistus III. succeeded him, to whom an embassy was sent by the Florentines, at the head of which was their celebrated Bishop Antonino. Amongst other points, they treated of bridling James Piccinino, who, having no command, in imitation of the ancient

1455. Marauders had repaired to the Siennese territory, together with Matthew of Capua, and no small body of soldiers, placing even the states of the church in apprehension. This new movement was quelled, the King of Naples being induced to take Piccinino into his pay. The Duke John left Florence, too, and returned to his father in Provence, probably little contented with the Florentines; bearing back with him the useless title of Duke of Calabria. The hostilities between the Duke of Milan and the King of Naples, were succeeded not only by friendship, but a close tie of consanguinity, in the double matrimony of Alphonso, son of Ferdinand, Duke of Calabria, with the daughter of Duke Sforza, and of the sister of the husband with Sforza Maria, third  
1456. son of the Duke Francis†.

Italy now drew a short breath in peace, when nature appeared to envy mankind this brief interval, and compensated, by her own scourges, for the absence of the terror of those of war. One of the most violent earthquakes happened on the 5th of December, in the kingdom of Naples, a country, on account of the fire concealed in the bowels of the earth, frequently subject to

\* Neri Capp. Comm.; Macchiav. Ist. lib. 6. Ammir. Istor. lib. 22.

† Giornali Napol. Rer. Ital. tom. 11. John Galeazzo, the eldest son had married with the daughter of the Duke of Mantua, and the second son with the daughter of the Duke of Savoy.

this calamity. It was said that no remembrance existed of so destructive an earthquake; the number of the killed, in the places that were shaken, were said to amount to 100,000. Fear is the mother of exaggeration: the number was probably less; but the terrible effects may be calculated, by the moderate historian, from the damage that was done. Many churches and habitations were thrown down in Naples\*, whilst Benevento, San Agata, Ariano, Ascoli, Brindisi, Campobasso, Avellino, Cuma, and other cities and towns were entirely destroyed. Nocera of Puglia, Gaeta, and Canossa were half ruined; in Aversa, the castle, with other buildings, fell to the ground†. Tuscany was struck, too, by a fierce whirlwind, which ran particularly along Casciano and the river Ema, tearing up every thing it met with in its passage, destroying and carrying along with it the walls of habitations, plucking up trees by the roots, and causing infinite damage‡. Credulous superstition believed that these misfortunes were predicted by the appearance of a comet

\* The Chronicle of Bologna (*Rer. Ital. Scrip.* tom. 21.) relates that, in one of the two towers placed before the bishopric, there was the head, and a bottle containing the blood of St. Januarius (*S. Genaro*). In the ruin of the tower, the bottle was untouched, and is considered as a miracle.

† Although the ruins are very great, when we afterwards calculate the number of the dead, we must consider that the inhabitants fly at the first signs of danger, and place themselves in a place of security. Hence the dead are fewer than what appears from the ruins. In our own times, in 1783, in Calabria and Sicily, the damage done was not less.

Amm. *Istor.* Fior. lib. 23., does not give a greater extension than twenty miles to the whirlwind: Macchiavel asserts it ran through the whole breadth of Italy, from one sea to the other. Buoninsegni, then living, agrees more with Ammirato. History of Florence.

of extraordinary size, which had been visible for almost two months\*.

\* Philosophers have first destroyed, and afterwards renewed, the fear of the comets, placed by them in the list of planets which turn around the sun in an ellipsis, to such a degree as to remain for many years invisible. If, therefore, they have cured mankind of the terror that they announce celestial wrath, they have frightened them with their vicinity. Mons. de la Lande, not long ago, frightened Paris, threatening that the great proximity of the comets operating upon the waters of the sea with attractive force like the moon and the sun, might produce a partial deluge. The famous comet of 1680, so much considered by Bayle, is one of those which most approaches the earth ; it has a period of five hundred and seventy-five years : seven periods are acknowledged ; the eight, is placed by Ulkihston in the year of the universal deluge. After this, in many of the seven periods, philosophers, too, unite with it some extraordinary events. Placing the deluge in the first or eighth ; in the second, 1767 years before Christ, in the times of Ogyges, the planet Venus, according to Varro, changed colour, size, and course. (*Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions Dissert. de Furet*). In the third, in the year 1193, before Christ, one of the Pleiades disappeared, according to historians and poets, *quæ septem dici, sex tamen esse solent*. OVID. Of the fourth, nothing extraordinary is mentioned. In the fifth, forty-four years before the birth of Christ, which coincides with the death of Cæsar, the sun was a long time extremely pale : the fifth period coincides with the fifth year of the empire of Justinian, in which the sun was also extraordinarily pale : and nine years afterwards the horrible pestilence began, the most destructive of all we have any memorial of in the annals of mankind. The seventh period is the time of the servour of the crusades, the eighth is that of 1680.

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## CHAPTER V.

DEATH OF NERI CAPPONI. — FLUCTUATIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT OF FLORENCE. — DEATH OF ALPHONSO AND THE POPE. — ELECTION OF PIUS II. — DEATH OF COSMO DE MEDICIS, FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY. — DEATH OF PIUS II. — PAUL II. SUCCEEDS HIM. — TRAGIC DEATH OF JACOPO OR JAMES PICCININO. — DEATH OF THE DUKE OF MILAN. — CONSPIRACY AGAINST PETER DE MEDICIS. — THE OUTLAWS MARCH AGAINST FLORENCE. — BATTLE OF MOLLINELLA. — QUALITIES OF THE YOUTH LORENZO DE MEDICIS. — SIGHTS IN FLORENCE. — PETER DE MEDICIS DIES. — HIS CHARACTER. — COMMOTION IN PRATO.

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THE death of Neri Capponi, which happened about this time\*, made no little stir in the republic. If  
1456. we consider the services he rendered to his country both in peace and in war, for the space of nearly forty years; that no affair of any consequence was treated without his advice; that almost every enterprise was attended with a happy issue; if we consider the disinterestedness which guided him, the immaculate conduct he displayed, and the many offices he held in a rich and corrupted republic, we must look upon him undoubtedly as the most respectable citizen of the state, not excepting even Cosmo. Superior to the latter in political talents, and in the virtuous love of his country and of

\* Macchiav. History, lib. 7., and Philip Nerli, Commen, fix it in 1455. Platina, in the Life he has written of him, in 1457. An elegant piece of Latin poetry in his praise, was written by Christopher Landino, a poem inspired by the merit of the deceased, and not by adulation.

liberty, he yielded to him in power, which Cosmo owed to riches and his partisans. The whole credit of the former was derived from his virtues and talents; whilst a great part of that of the latter was owing to faction. Although the universal esteem Neri enjoyed from the public, gave Cosmo sometimes umbrage, he still endeavoured dexterously to gain him over to him, which he easily effected; and for the space of nearly twenty-one years they governed conjointly the helm of the republic.

<sup>1457.</sup> This union deprived the lovers of innovation of every hope. After his death some movements took place in the Florentine government, the effect rather of secret trick and intrigue, than of open force. In order to comprehend their origin better, it becomes necessary to refer to past times.

It has been remarked, that, on the return of Cosmo, the government of the republic was confined to a few individuals, and care was taken that it should not go from them. The old signiory, leaving little power to chance, created the new one. A government like this could not meet with universal approbation in a free republic, and, for some time, murmurs were heard on every side, until ten years afterwards, in the year 1444, they were obliged to restrain the Florentine loquacity by deprivation of employment, exile and other punishments; by arresting and suppressing with them, one of the most precious rights of the citizens, the liberty of judging those who governed them! \* After the death of Capponi, however, the partisans of Cosmo desired a change; either that they were disunited amongst themselves, or that the unquiet and unstable disposition of the citizens, loved innovation, however dangerous to their

\* Nerli Comm. lib. 3. Ammir. Florentine History, lib. 11.

interests ; either annoyed by this perpetual dictator, or tired of those who made and unmade magistrates at their option, they chose rather to depend upon chance than the will of the former. These malecontents united together, and represented their wishes to Cosmo, praying him to leave the election of the magistrates to the issue of the ballots and to the approbation of free suffrages. Although this was a kind of rebellion against his authority, Cosmo saw immediately that they would be chastised by his consenting to their requests. The polls were full of his friends and dependants, and his favour in the close method of elections might cause whoever pleased him amongst the former to be elected. By leaving the choice to chance, and to the vote of the citizens, he remained in possession of the same authority, from the power that his riches and his dependants gave him, whilst the mischief fell upon those whom his favour either could not or would not distinguish, having so laudable a pretext as the new change to withhold his favour. This measure was attended with the issue he had foreseen. Chance calling to the employments a greater number of persons ; the adherents of Cosmo, who had wished for the change by the laws of balloting, could more rarely obtain them. By these laws, persons of all ranks were admitted, some of whom, proud of their new honours, publicly despised those who had desired this new order of things, who had previously been regarded with reverence. The power of Cosmo remained the same, since all the new persons in office were, either from pecuniary reasons or relations of commerce, his dependants. The innovators soon perceived their folly, as they had taken away the government, not from him, but from themselves ; and began to importune him to restore the ancient order of things. But Cosmo, in order to make them feel

their error more acutely, and that they might bear the penalty of it for a longer time, would not attend to them. They united together, and referring to the supreme magistrates, (Gonfalonieri,) who were drawn every two months, to the other magistrates and their friends, they frequently set on foot a kind of conspiracy, in order to oblige them to resume the old government. Their endeavours were useless, and the gonfaloniere, Matthew Bartoli\*, who attempted the reform, against the opinion of Cosmo, was, by the signiors, not only reprehended, but laughed at. Cosmo obtained a double end; he punished the ingratitude of his adherents, and gained greater popularity, since the new method of elections was favourable to the generality of the people, and if any opportunity arose to favour their interests, he failed not to maintain it with warmth. At this moment they were considering the means of diminishing the public debt contracted in the late oppressive wars. In order to divide the taxes, the just method was proposed again, which had been conceived by John his father; a method dear to the people, but dreaded by the great, and the rich capitalists; and ten citizens were named, to carry it into execution.

In the mean time, however, the liberty regained by the Florentine people, and the greater equality upon which they were placed, had greatly increased the pride and insolence of the citizens against the members of the old government; so difficult is it, in a free constitution, to restrain within certain limits, both the power of the great, and the capricious insolence of the people. Cosmo perceived the time was arrived, in which it ought to be

\* Macchiavel, says Donato Cocchi, but he had been gonfaloniere the year before.

restrained. Lucas Pitti, a ferocious and daring man, an enemy of the new liberty of the government, was created gonfaloniere, an instrument of which Cosmo availed himself to effect the new revolution. The attempt was not unattended with danger, since many citizens might be animated by a desire of obtaining by force their reconquered rights, and Cosmo, therefore, charged this man with the execution of it; reserving to himself the power of favouring him in secret, by feigning himself to be a mere spectator. Thus, too, in any sinister event, the gonfaloniere would have been the person sacrificed. Pitti wished, at the beginning, to attempt the change without violence, and persuade the members of the  
1458. magistracy, that this new liberty was an unbridled licentiousness, which the people made use of in order to insult persons of respectability. Nothing more false and more unjust could have been asserted; and the magistrates, therefore, refused to attend to it; nay, some of them began to inveigh publicly against such counsels. Among the rest, Jerome Macchiavel demanded, with all earnestness and energy, what were the motives, in the present state of external and internal peace and tranquillity, which could induce the republic to such a change? Nothing more than the ambition of a few, who wished, as tyrants, to exercise their command over the vulgar, as over beasts of burthen, and to continue it in their own hands. Nothing was indeed more true. Macchiavel, however, who, if he had exceeded in his expressions, might have been called to order, and corrected by the public magistrates, was, (who would have thought it?) arrested as a seditious person, in a free city, and, in order to discover whether he had other accomplices in the same way of thinking, was put to torture. Upon mentioning An-

thony Barbadori and Charles Banizzi, who thought as he did, they were arrested and tortured with him.

It appearing, however, no longer necessary to defer a reformation, which all the powerful, and Cosmo himself wished for, arms were given to their adherents, and the square was filled with soldiers, the people called to discussion, and the signiors, with two hundred and fifty other citizens having come down to the circle, took upon themselves ample powers to reform the government, by bringing it back to the old method, thereby extinguishing that little spark of liberty, kindled anew by the condescension of Cosmo; since the old government, at every change of magistracy, created a new one almost at their option. All this was done in the face of the people, who, either frightened or bribed, or servile to the principal citizens, passively approved every deliberation, at least by their silence. The violence was crowned by the condemnation to the confines, of fourteen citizens, who had declared themselves attached to liberty; amongst whom was Jerome Macchiavel. This unfortunate man, having broken his parole, was declared a rebel; and, being afterwards betrayed by one of the signiors of the Lunigiana, was brought to Florence, and died in wretchedness in prison, having well learnt what a misfortune it was to have received a republican soul in a country of slaves. Nor is this event very glorious to the memory of Cosmo. The gonfaloniere, Lucas Pitti, was richly rewarded by him, as well as by all those who had wished for a reform, acquired great authority in the republic, and became, after Cosmo, the principal citizen in the state. At the end of the authority, it was determined that that magistracy, which was called of the priors of the arts, (*priori delle arti*) should be called priors of liberty, a

kind of insult to lost liberty, with other frivolous and vain changes of ceremonial precedence between the magistrates\*.

In the mean time two important personages had died; King Alphonso and Pope Calistus III. The first, King of Arragon, of Valencia, and Sicily, had acquired by his valour the kingdom of Naples, which latter, as his conquest, he thought he had a right to dispose of, by leaving it to his natural son Ferdinand, Duke of Calabria, the others, according to the disposition of the father, to John, King of Navarre, his brother, having no legitimate children. Valiant, prudent, a lover of letters, a friend of the learned, with whom, laying aside the majesty of royalty, he lived rather as a private person than a king, he may be mentioned among the sovereigns of greater merit. A greediness of augmenting his states was the principal spring of his actions. His life was a perpetual scene of action. He died as he lived, having waged war with the Genoese, and made his greatest enemy, John of Angers, son of Regnier; as the Genoese, incapable of resisting his arms, called him into Italy and made him their lord. This man was a dangerous enemy of his son Ferdinand. Thereto was united the enmity of Pope Calistus, who wished one of his nephews to succeed Alphonso in the kingdom of Naples, and, if he had lived, would have brought him to great troubles; but he soon died, and Æneas Silvius Piccolomini, of Corsiniano, was elected, who, from his papal name of Pius II., afterwards assumed the name of Pienza. Great an enemy as Calistus had been to Ferdinand, as

\* For a detail of all these interesting events, see particularly Macchiav. Ist. lib. 7. and Philip Nerli, Comm. lib. 3. See also Ammirato, lib. 23, but, being devoted to the house of Medici, he passes briefly over such important facts.

great a friend to him was Pius. His first cares were turned towards the Turks, by inviting all the princes to a holy alliance; to form which, a congress was held <sup>1459.</sup> in Mantua, where either the princes themselves, or their ambassadors, were to meet; and on his journey to Mantua, he was received in Florence with the accustomed pomp. He was preceded in this city by Galeazzo Sforza, the eldest son of the Duke Francis, for whom the Florentines made sumptuous amusements, consisting of tournaments and chases\*. The congress was held in Mantua, where the pope employed all his eloquence to move the faithful. But the time of enthusiasm for crusades was over; little advantage was drawn from it, and the war in Italy was soon rekindled between the two rivals to the throne of Naples, John of Angers, and Ferdinand. The Florentines preserved a neutrality, although stimulated by both rivals to follow their party. John presented himself in vain before Naples, with a great fleet. The king was in Abruzzo, but the prudence and activity displayed by Queen Isabella prevented every movement. John, however, was received at Castellamare by the Duke of Sessa, and many barons who had rebelled against Ferdinand. Amongst them was Anthony Orsino, Prince of Tarento, the most powerful of them. The son of Alphonso had neither the sense <sup>1460.</sup> nor the valour possessed by his father; and, being frequently defeated by the enemy, he was in

\* Amongst the animals of which he made display, Ammirato mentions a certain beast found in Abyssinia (Giraffa); it may be doubted, since Christopher Landino, who lived at that time, speaking of the two giraffe sent by the Soldan of Egypt, one to the King of Naples, the other to Lorenzo the Magnificent, in the year 1487, calls them "*Bestias nostro cælo incognitas*," which phrase he would not have used, if Florence had seen that beast not many years before.



danger of losing his kingdom, and if it is true that his wife, Isabella, went secretly, disguised as a capuchin, to find his uncle, the Prince of Tarento, who was the most formidable of the enemies of her husband, and, throwing herself at his feet, appeased him, (which proved the salvation of Ferdinand,) it is a further proof of the capacity of this princess\*. The activity displayed by the wife was supported by the councils and the aids of the pope and the Duke of Milan, with which powerful support she maintained herself on the throne. The celebrated Scanderbeck, who had so much distinguished himself in Albania, against the Turks, being summoned, probably, by the pope, came to bear arms in her favour; or, perhaps, seeing himself of no use to resist the continually-increasing power of the Turks, this indefatigable leader came to take part in the expedition meditated against the common enemy. The endeavours used by the pontiff, in favour of Ferdinand, were reprehended by those who had heard him preach, with so much fervour, the crusade against the Turks, and saw him now turned against the Duke John: but certainly the pontiff was guided by wise political views, in keeping the house of France out of the possession of Naples, which house succeeding thereto afterwards, brought too great a series of calamities upon Italy, calamities which derived their immediate origin from the ruin of the family of Ferdinand.

<sup>1461.</sup> After various actions, it became necessary for Duke John to retreat; as he was entirely abandoned by his partisans. Jacop Piccinino, who, at the beginning, had taken the part of Ferdinand, had afterwards abandoned him, by joining his enemies, and bearing arms with them. Remaining with arms in hand, he finally

\* Giornali Napol. Rer. Ital. tom. 21. p. 1133.

made a reconciliation with Ferdinand, who, in  
 1462. order to attach him the more to him, or at  
 least, to keep him quiet, conceded to him the principa-  
 lity of Sulmona\*.

The Florentine republic, during the remainder of the  
 life of Cosmo, continued under the same system,  
 1463. neither of liberty, nor of formal slavery. She was  
 oppressed by the dread of, or rather tyrannized over by the  
 dependents of Cosmo, and particularly by Lucas Pitti.  
 Cosmo, superior to all, who now feared no rivals, and  
 made the laws observed, in all cases which were not  
 hostile to the preservation of his power, as long as he  
 enjoyed sufficient vigour of mind and body, attended to  
 business; by his authority, he curbed the greediness of de-  
 pendants, but, when weakened and overpowered by years,  
 he finally left the reins in their hands. The latter, for  
 the remainder of his life, abused their power, making a  
 prey of the public revenues, and drawing a fund of lucre,  
 either from oppression or favour†. The immense riches  
 of Cosmo, (besides the assistance he gave the needy,) were  
 employed in embellishing the city and the country  
 with sacred and profane buildings, and encouraging the  
 studious, and lovers of learning. The hill of Fiesole  
 still boasts of his superb edifices. Saint Jerome, and the  
 magnificent abbey, the splendid villa at the summit,  
 which appears the queen of that delightful hill‡, Ca-

\* Giornali Nap. loc. cit.

† Macchiav. Ist. lib. 7. Nerli Comm. lib. 3.

‡ The family of the Medicis would derive pleasure in seeing this villa possessed by a Florentine gentleman, a rival, in his taste of letters, to Cosmo and Lorenzo, and not inferior to any Florentine, either ancient or modern, in the more profound sciences. "The author speaks of his learned friend, the Chev. Julius Mozzi, lately deceased."

reggi, Cafaggiolo, Trebbio, are all works of Cosmo; whilst in Florence, besides the sumptuous palace in Via Larga, the churches of St. Laurence, St. Mark, St. Verdiana owe their origin to him. In Mugello, too, he erected the church of the Minor Friars, situated in the midst of a delightful grove, and an hospital in Jerusalem, with many others, a detail of which is given by his historians\*. He met with heavy calamities in his old age. He saw his son John die, on whom he had fixed the principal hope of his house. He had the honour to receive, on this occasion, a consolatory letter from Pope Pius II., to which he replied with his usual dignity; christian morality, clothed in the garments of philosophy, and the gospel grafted on the precepts of the school of Athens, form its prominent features†. Peter, his other son, was weak and infirm, the father also of two young children; nor could Cosmo then foresee, that one of them would not only rival, but surpass him in glory, and it is on this account, that not expecting much from the talents, nor the physical strength, of Peter,

\* It is believed by many persons, that Lorenzo, brother of Cosmo, participated in the expense of all the sacred buildings. Various writers, and amongst them, Ammirato, in his "Ritratti," and Borghini, have asserted it, upon the testimony of Poggio, in his funeral oration of Lorenzo: this, however, is false; as is inferred from an authentic document of the Medicean archive, wherein the inheritance of John being divided between Cosmo and Lorenzo, by commissary judges, it is clearly said, that the two brothers participated in the expenses of the church of San Lorenzo alone, the others being at the charge of Cosmo: they are all mentioned there in detail.

† The two letters referred to by Monsieur Fabbroni, may be consulted in the notes to the life of Cosmo. That of the Florentine merchant appears far more dignified. The pope wrote of himself; Cosmo had too many learned secretaries. John died in 1462, losing a son, named Cosmo, 11 years before.

after the death of John, when going through his vast palace, he exclaimed, it was too large a house for so small a family. Being attacked by the gout, and <sup>1464.</sup> difficulty of passing urine, he died at seventy-five years of age, in the villa of Careggi. Hardly will moderns believe, who know how to give the just value to the obscure metaphysics of Plato, that Cosmo derived therefrom both consolation and alleviation of his pains, as Ticino will lead us to suppose.

Few citizens have been so much praised as Cosmo. The learned, who are so greatly indebted to him, have made his name resound. He has certainly a right to be called one of the greatest protectors of letters; his treasures were employed in promoting them. His house was opened to all who cultivated them, and those who escaped from the ruins of Constantinople, found their best asylum in Florence, and in his house. He is the more to be prized, inasmuch as, being himself almost without learning, he held letters in the highest esteem, almost by a kind of instinct. We must, however, consider this citizen under two points of view, as a private and a public man. Under the first, he deserves the greatest praise. He was pious, beneficent, liberal; and, although the richest individual of his age, he was most moderate in all his expenses, making no ostentation, and thus enabling his fellow-citizens, by his own modesty, to bear more easily the disproportion of riches and power. Considering him as a public man, we must deduct much from those encomiums which have been passed upon him. The two Capponi, and particularly Neri, were superior to him in love of country, and in political talents. It is true, that he had power sufficient to keep the government of Florence in his hands for about thirty years. Other great citizens, however, such

as Thomas Albizzi, had been able to do the same with less means. Cosmo's means were very simple; viz., riches. There was not a powerful citizen who was not his debtor\*, and he spared many the shame of asking, when he knew them to be in need; their necessities, the loans he furnished them with, and which he never demanded again from many, the hope all founded in him, kept the city dependant upon him, which may be said to have been purchased by him, as by a new Didius Julianus. No man was better acquainted with the commerce of his times, and the art of growing rich: by this means he was enabled to carry on war even with the enemies of the republic; and the Venetians and King Alphonso were obliged to accelerate a peace, from Cosmo having almost emptied Naples and Venice of money by his credit. But his desire of being dictator of the republic; the cruel proscription at his return from exile; that of 1458; and finally, the despotism and the avidity exercised by his agents, who were unrestrained for the last years of his life, throw a great shade over the lustre of his character. He, however, founded the basis upon which the dominion of his descendants was erected. Although not a learned man, he was gifted with an easy and natural eloquence, and was lepid and facetious, even on serious occasions†. A lover at all times of republican modesty, he prescribed moderate, and not sumptuous, obsequies.

\* Macchiav. Ist. lib. 7.

† Macchiavel and other writers mention various anecdotes of him. Rinaldo Albizzi and other outlaws having caused him to be told, in a threatening tone, that they were not asleep; he answered, "he believed it, having taken sleep away from them." Another time, when the hen was hatching: "she will do it badly out of her nest." A few hours before his death, his wife asked him, why he kept his eyes shut; he answered, "to accustom them."

But the republic, having deputed ten citizens for this purpose, chose to honour him with a public funeral; and, upon a proposition made by Donat Acciajoli, a<sup>1465.</sup> public decree conferred upon him the title of *Father of his country*\*.

The death of Cosmo was succeeded by that of Pius II. The fervour with which he continued promoting the crusade against the Turks, the continual agitation of mind and body in which this enterprise kept him, were unequal to his age and constitution. Cosmo judged wisely of it, a little time before his death, by saying that the pope, already old, undertook the enterprises of a young man. Pius II. was one of the most respectable pontiffs; he was a statesman, and promoter of the ecclesiastical interests, and of religion, and learned both in sacred and in profane letters. The Venetian, Barbo, called Paul II., succeeded him, but was very unlike his predecessor.

The tragic end of James or Jacopo Piccinino, adds nothing to the atrocious character of Ferdinand, but throws some shade over the generosity of the Duke Francis of Milan. James, following the footsteps of his father, Nicholas, emulated him alike in his glory and in his crimes. Following the custom of the leaders of that age, he bore arms, sometimes in favour of, sometimes against, the duke and Ferdinand. Such a man was eagerly sought for in war, and dreaded in peace. King Ferdinand had latterly made peace with him, through the mediation of the Duke of Milan, gave him and his troops a very liberal pay, and, moreover, made him a present of the city of Sulmona. Besides this, he

\* See Macchiav., Silvano Razzi, Ammir. lib. 23., Fabb. Vita Cosmi.

possessed other cities and castles in that kingdom, with brilliant titles, and rivalled the first Neapolitan princes. He had not, however, much faith in Ferdinand, and kept himself at a distance from him. The fate of the Duke of Sessa, one of the most potent princes of that kingdom, who, upon being visited in a friendly manner by the king, was arrested and despoiled of his states, and sent a prisoner to Naples, had filled James's mind with a proper mistrust. He communicated his suspicions to the Duke of Milan, who, advising him to seek a place of safety, invited him to that city, and in order to give him greater security, made him marry his natural daughter Drusiana, and loaded him with presents. The curiosity, however, which attracted crowds of the Milanese around, to contemplate him, the admiration with which they spoke of him, could not make his presence in Milan dear to the duke, who advised him still more to accept the offers of Ferdinand. Being assured by the words of the duke, and invited by that king, who had given him an extensive passport, (*Salvo Condolito*,) he went with his wife to Naples, getting better of the diffidence which the Duke Borso d'Este filled him with, who was better acquainted with the heart of Ferdinand. He was received with joyful preparations by the whole court; but after a few days, being led by the king, by stratagem, into the castle, together with his son Francis, he was arrested, his troops disarmed and stripped, and himself immediately put to death\*.

\* Giorn. Napol. Rer. Ital. tom. 21. It is said, that, wishing to see the galley prisons, getting up at a window, he broke his neck by falling down.—Cron. di Bologna. See, above all, the Brescian Chronology, Rer. Ital. tom. 21, where all the manœuvres carried on between Ferdinand and the Duke Sforza are described at length,

The Duke of Milan survived only a few months: his health had been for some time ruined, and the life he led accelerated his end. He, however, shewed himself on horseback in Milan, even to his last days, and died almost suddenly. He was the most celebrated man of his times: son of a brave and enterprising father, he rivalled him in valour, and surpassed him in wisdom. The greater part of his life, that is, until he arrived at the Duchy of Milan, he passed in the midst of arms. A conqueror in twenty-two regular battles, and in many affairs of minor note, alike an able warrior and a politician, he raised his family from the calling of a ploughman, as his father had been, to sovereign splendour. His interests united him almost always with the Florentines, from whom, and particularly from Cosmo, he received powerful aid in the most dangerous moments; and in turn he became one of the supports of the Medicæan family. Cosmo had only to complain of not having been seconded by him in the acquisition of Lucca, as he had promised him, a thorn which remained in his heart until his death. He left various sons, the eldest of whom, Galeazzo Maria, inherited his states, but not his talents and glory. He was in France at the death of his father, with 4,000 horse, in aid of that king. Alexander, a brother of the deceased duke, a man of valour, was in pay of the King of Naples. Tristano, a natural son, was in Bologna: the other sons were still young, whence tumults might have been excited; but there was so much order in that government,

who, however, wished (as it appears,) that the odium of the execution should fall upon Ferdinand. A Latin manuscript tragedy, upon this action, is in the Estensan library, with the title, "*De Captivitate Ducis Jacob.*"



that no movement took place\*, not only in Milan, but in the rest of his states, and the son, having returned, peaceably succeeded his father.

Peter de Medicis, who had some time since succeeded Cosmo in Florence, and was heir to his riches, and the paternal authority in the government, was incapable of supporting the burthen. Almost always infirm, the pains arising from the gout permitted him not to avail himself of the powers of his mind. His sons, Lorenzo and Julian, were still young; and, being surrounded by unfaithful agents, persecuted by a powerful faction, he found himself at the brink of ruin. Lucas Pitti, who built the great palace of that name, formerly a rival of Cosmo, was the head of the faction against Peter, because, as he was the first citizen in the state, after Cosmo, when the latter was dead, he chose not to be the second. Others were impelled by various causes. Nicholas Soderini wished that the city should be governed liberally, and not by a few. Agnolo Acciajoli had private reasons of hatred against the family of the Medicis†; but the most dangerous man of all, was Diotisalvi Neroni, in whose counsels Cosmo, on his death-bed, persuaded Peter to confide entirely, without knowing him sufficiently. This man, perceiving that the basis of the power of Cosmo consisted in the money he kept in the hands of many citizens, under the pretext of remedying disorders, prevailed upon Peter to withdraw considerable sums from the hands of a great many of those who were debtors, which sums had been left in their hands by Cosmo, to keep them in dependance upon him. This measure converted a great number of his adherents into enemies, and the odium increased: because this

\* Chronic. Bresc. Rer. Ital. tom. 21. † Michael. Bruti, His.

transaction drew along with it many failures. Neroni acted secretly in concert with Pitti, hoping, that when Peter was ruined, Pitti, whose frivolity and incapacity he well knew, would not be able to support him, and that he, (Neroni,) would become the first person in the government.

In the mean time, the party of the Medicis being weakened, an interesting change had been made; that is, the abuse removed of creating the new signatory from the old: the ballots had been closed, and the election of offices left to chance, as before the appointment of the last authority (*balia*); a measure, which, if it provided not a remedy for the defects of the Florentine constitution, left, nevertheless, a sufficient liberty. This change might have pacified the citizens, and was, indeed, received with the greatest joy, but was not sufficient for the enemies of Peter, who thought, nevertheless, that the riches of the house, and his adherents, would have maintained him the first person in power in the republic. Seeing the diseases he was subject to, and this want of energy of mind, they considered this the opportune moment to ruin that house. Upon the death of the Duke of Milan, they held a conference, whether they ought to continue to his son the large pension that was paid to the father, as the most useful ally of the republic. Peter advised it; the contrary party were against it, telling them, that, with that sum, a support would be purchased for the family of the Medicis, with which they might continue to tyrannize over them. The opinion of Peter prevailed\*: the two factions grew constantly warmer and

\* The Florentine writers, after hinting at the dispute, leave the issue in doubt, but, in the Brescian History of Soldo, the Florentines and the Genoese are said to have paid 60,000 florins to the new duke.

were called of the *mountain* and the *plain*. The former, which was contrary to the Medicis, was so called from the habitation of Pitti, near the Mount of St. George. Various secret assemblies were held by both. Nicholas Fedini was in that of the Mountain, who revealed all the secrets to Peter. He communicated to him a list of citizens, who had subscribed to it. Peter, roused at the number and the respectability of the former, sought a subscription also in his own favour: and such is the instability, the duplicity, or the frivolity of mankind, that many of the same names were found in both lists.

Nicholas Soderini, an enemy of the house of Medicis, was now gonfaloniere, and might, therefore, propose measures fatal to that family. The party hoped much from it; but his brother, Thomas Soderini, who was well acquainted with the character of the gonfaloniere, and the purity of his own intentions, since he had only in view the liberty of his country, proved to him that this had been obtained by the suppression of the ancient authority, (*balia*,) that every other attempt might cost blood; and, although he found him ready enough for action, he deterred him, under various pretexts, until he terminated his period of office. This was concluded without doing any thing of importance, and he was despised by both parties. All stratagems being now of no avail, the contrary party perceived they could not destroy the Medicean power, without the death of Peter, and that they would not be able to effect this without some external aid to support them in their operations. They had recourse to Hercules d'Este, brother of Duke Borso; and this man, who was ready to serve the faction, came secretly with 1,300 horse to the confines of Pistoia.

Peter was advised by Bentivoglio, who governed Bologna, of the approach of these troops to Tuscany;

and growing suspicious, he advised a captain of the Duke of Milan, who was in Romagna, to approach Florence with his troops. Peter, afflicted with the gout, caused himself frequently to be carried in a sedan to that city. The conspirators agreed amongst themselves to murder him in one of these journeys, but the blow failed; for Peter, either taking another road from his own suspicions, or his son Lorenzo obliging him to do so from prudence, he arrived safely at Florence\*. Both parties then waited to arm themselves more openly, but the party of the Medicis appeared the strongest, since, besides the troops of Romagna, many of those of Bentivoglio had arrived in Florence in his favour. He had been able to gain over to him some of his most powerful adversaries, and particularly Lucas Pitti, who, prevailed upon by the promises made by Peter, and frightened at the danger, had made a reconciliation with him, and upon a visit the former paid him, they had amicably embraced each other.

The contrary faction, in the mean time, was wavering in uncertainty. But Nicholas Soderini, thinking it no longer time for consultation, but for action, armed himself with all the inhabitants of his quarter, and went to meet Pitti, exhorting him to do the same, but in vain; faithful to his agreement with Peter, he refused to stir. The remains of the conspirators, knowing themselves to be greatly inferior to the Medicis, if they came in con-

\* Some historians relate, that Lorenzo marched a piece of road before his father; hearing from the country people that he would find the way before him full of armed men, he sent back to warn his father, who took another road, and, in the mean time, going before and meeting them, he frankly asserted that Peter was following him at a short distance. Ammirato, however, in his "Ritratti," denies this fact.

tact, saw the necessity of entering into any agreement with Peter. The signiory had prudently observed neutrality. They treated therewith of the terms of making a reconciliation, and as Peter, on account of his infirmity, could not leave the house, it was agreed by the principal of the enemy's faction, to go and meet him. Nicholas Soderini alone, who knew the inutility of the reconciliation, and the ruin of their affairs, would not attend, but withdrew into the country, to await his exile. Coming into the presence of Peter, one of them assuming a courageous tone, and declaiming against the civil discords, wished to make him perceive that man is guilty who first has recourse to arms, and consequently endeavours to evade the laws; and that, in order to avoid greater evils, they were come to make themselves acquainted with his intentions. Peter, who felt himself the strongest, answered them, that not the man who first takes up arms is to be condemned, but he, who gives the motive for it; the blow, therefore, fell entirely upon themselves, as he had taken up arms in his own defence, a right which nature grants to every man. He added, it appeared to him very strange, they did not think that city could remain tranquil and secure, whilst the family of the Medicis, who had been her great benefactors, lived therein, bitterly rebuking Neroni for his ingratitude, and concluding that it was necessary to obey the laws. These were only vague and general discourses, and the assembly was dismissed, with the conclusion that it was necessary to make reforms in the city, a reformation which, from the tone used by Peter, his enemies could foresee would be their ruin. In fact, having created a new signiory, favourable to the Medicis, he called an assembly of the people together on the sixth of September, and appointed an authority (*balia*), to reform the government.

The enemies of Peter waited not for the consequences, but went into voluntary exile; which was confirmed by the government; Acciajoli being sent with his sons, and Neroni, with his two brothers, to Barletta; Soderini and his son to Provence. The limits to elections were fixed, as in the times of Cosimo: Lucas Pitti was spared, but being considered as a traitor by his party, and as a suspicious character by the contrary one, he fell into the greatest humiliation\*. Acciajoli endeavoured to appease the mind of Peter by a cunning and officious letter: he was, however, rejected, and Peter told him that he easily forgot private injuries, but the republic could not † do the same.

Many of the exiled Florentines, despising the law which sent them to the confines, repaired to Venice,

1467. knowing that the hatred that senate bore the Florentine republic for having maintained Duke Sforza, was still alive. They made known their projects to the son of Pallas Strozzi, a very rich merchant, in whose mind, the wound of the injury done to his family, was not yet healed. Sore minds are easily moved; hence, although the Venetian senate continually stimulated by the Florentine outlaws, did not openly declare itself, desirous of seeing the republic humbled, or at least embarrassed, it furnished her enemies

\* The writers of these events are very numerous, who, according to their parties, have painted the things in various colours. See *Macchia*. Ist. Ammir. Ist. lib. 23. *Jacob. Papien Comm.* lib. 3., and in the notes to the *Life of Lorenzo of Fabbroni*, the various letters of the faction adverse to the Medicis.

† *Macchiav.* Ist. lib. 7, mentions the two letters much altered; particularly the answer of Peter, which instead of the harsh and bitter repulse, such as is mentioned by the historian, is very temperate. See both of them taken from the Medician archive, *Fabb. Vita Lauren.* note 16.

with the means of carrying on the war; and sent them Bartholomew Colleone, one of the best generals of that age. Besides the outlaws, various princes, Hercules D'Este, Alexander Sforza, Lord of Pesaro, Ordelaaffi, &c. &c., joined this man, forming a very strong army, rendered still more formidable by the fame of the general. It was not less than 8,000 cavalry, and 600 infantry without reckoning the aid sent by those princes. This army was led upon the territory of Imola. The Florentines, seeing the tempest preparing, had made a league with the King of Naples, hastened the aids from the Duke of Milan, choosing for their general, Frederic Count of Urbino. The young Duke Galleazzo chose to come in person with his troops, in support of the Florentines. Their army, not inferior to that of the enemy, halted upon the Bolognese territory, not far from them. The Florentines wished for battle, but their prudent general was embarrassed by the youthful presumption evinced by the Duke of Milan, who united, as customary, much imprudence with little knowledge, and who arrogated to himself the first posts; consequently no enterprise was attempted. The duke, however, was artfully re-called to Florence, and, in his absence, a battle took place between the two armies, on the 25th July, at the place called the Molinella\*. It began by a skirmish, which became a general battle, lasted many hours, and was terminated only by night; and although, according to custom, and from the armour, worn in those times, the slain were few, this battle was considered very san-

\* Some say that he was present at the battle, others that he returned to Milan, the danger of his absence being placed before him by the Florentines, and the views the Venetians entertained against his states.—Macchiav. lib 7. Mich. Bruti, His. Fior. lib. 4.

guinary \*. Hercules D'Este was badly wounded in the foot, and went lame for the rest of his life. The battle remained undecided, and if there was any advantage, Colleone appears to have enjoyed it †; but the most certain proofs of the issue being undecided, was the inaction in which both armies remained.

In the mean time, the Venetians, who acted with deeper views, had drawn the forces of the duke, from Lombardy to attack him, if affairs had been disastrous, and concerted against him other attempts ‡, which not answering, and the two armies retiring to winter quarters, peace was afterwards treated for by the Duke Borso de Este and the pope. The imperious manner, <sup>1468.</sup> and the interested views of a Venetian pope, in favour of his fellow-citizens, irritated the Florentines, the Duke of Milan, and King Ferdinand, who had sent the Duke of Calabria with troops in favour of the Florentines. The pope pretended, by publishing the conditions as a sentence, that all the princes allied together, should pay 100,000 dollars a year, to Colleone, in order that he might act against the Turks in Albania; taxing the powers at his option, threatening the obstinate with excommunication. The Florentines, who were the most heavily taxed, knowing that was done to feed the general of the Venetians, as a reward for having endeavoured to

\* Macchiavel, who always turns these battles into ridicule, says that not a person was killed, *Ist. lib. 7.* Michael Bruto, who almost always blames him, copying him, says the same; Ammirato quotes various authors, wherein the dead are made to amount to a thousand, and maintains that the victory belonged to the Florentines.

† It is said thus in the *Brescian Chronology* of Chris. Soldo *Rer. Ital. t. 21.* The other writers of those times give no advantage to any. *Chronology Bologna Rer. Ital. t. 18,* besides the one quoted.

‡ *Cron. Bresc.*



excite so much discord in Italy, certainly did not like such a condition, but feigned, nevertheless, to accept it, saying, however, that, as soon as Colleone with his troops should appear in Albania, they would begin to pay their quota. Every hope of treaty would have been at an end, if the Duke Borso had not interposed his placid counsel, and made all difficulties easy: peace was consequently signed in April, both parties being reciprocally bound to restore the places they had occupied.

In all the intrigues and civil commotions of factions, as well as in the management of foreign affairs, the feeble mind and body of Peter received great support from his son Lorenzo, who, although a very young man, soon gave proofs of extraordinary sagacity and prudence. His genius, called into action by the difficult circumstances and dangers in which his country was placed, began early to announce the great qualities, with which he was endowed. He knew how to temper his moderate, but necessary rigour by clemency; in the victory gained by his faction, no blood was spilt, and knowing that it was necessary either to ruin the enemy entirely, or gain him, he endeavoured, as much as he could, to succeed in the latter, nature having endowed him with that amiable gentility of manner, which is so well acquainted with the method of gaining hearts\*. That Lorenzo was one of the principal actors in contending with and subduing the adverse faction, was acknowledged even by the King

\* Valori relates, in the Life of Lorenzo, that his brother Philip, in the disturbances described, brought Anthony Tebalducci, his bitter enemy, to Lorenzo for reconciliation. Lorenzo observing the embarrassment of Philip in beginning to speak on so difficult an occasion, told him frankly, "I should not be obliged to you, Philip, to introduce me a friend, but by converting an enemy into a friend, you have done me a favour, which I hope you will repeat as often as you can."

of Naples, who could not refrain from congratulating him for having behaved with so much prudence on so difficult an occasion\*. That foresighted sovereign already saw the young Lorenzo becoming master of the Florentine republic; and that it was of the greatest importance to preserve his friendship; he had already made a personal acquaintance with him, as Lorenzo, either for affairs of state or curiosity, had been at Naples, and was very affectionately received by that sovereign†.

The war over, and civil storms allayed, the house of Medicis thought fit to gratify the city of Florence with sights, well knowing how greatly the people delighted in pompous shows. Magnificent tournaments and tiltings were ordered to take place, and were exhibited in the square of the Holy Cross (Santa Croce,) where according to the custom of knight-errantry, hitherto not abolished, the most respectable citizens, and foreign nobility clothed in rich attire, met for several days on horseback with their lances. The brothers Medicis tilted, and either from his own merit, the favour of the people, or the officious partiality of the judges, Lorenzo was declared conqueror‡. These tiltings took place in February.

\* See the letter of congratulation of King Ferdinand to Lorenzo. Fabb. vita di L. note 18.

† Although no historian speaks of the journey of Lorenzo to Naples, it is not less certain; since we find it mentioned in a letter of James Acciajoli to Anjeolo Acciajoli: note 16 to the Life of Lorenzo of Fabbroni, which begins, Lorenzo of Peter was here, &c.

‡ Lorenzo himself appears to have doubted of this favour, if, indeed, what he says is not a trait of his modesty.—“To follow, or do as others did, I jousted upon the square of Santa Croce with great expense, in which I find 10,000 florins to have been spent; and although I was not strong in arms and in blows, the first honour was still adjudged to me, that is an helmet all furnished with silver, with a Mars for a crest.”—Note 20. to the Life of Lorenzo di Fabb.

The festivals were afterwards increased in June, when Lorenzo married Clarice Orsini\*; a matrimony which in the eyes of the enemies of the house of Medicis, became a new crime, it being said that instead of being contented with a republican citizen, his equal, Peter went to search for alliance with foreign princes, who might assist him upon necessity, and place his country in bondage.

<sup>1469.</sup> For a short period the flames of a little war were rekindled in Rome by the death of Gismond Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, a man defamed for every vice, and who was succeeded by his natural son Robert, a youth full of excellent qualities, valorous, and beloved by the people. But the pope, on account of legitimate progeny failing, maintained that this feud had devolved upon the church, and pretended, by force of arms, to maintain his rights. He took into his pay Alexander Sforza, brother of the former Duke Francis, who possessing Pesaro, hoped to obtain the investiture of Rimini, and found a state upon the ruin of Malatesta, whence he willingly engaged, and pitched his camp around Rimini, with the pontifical troops, led on by the Archbishop of Spalatro. Robert was supported by the Florentines, by the Count Frederic of Urbino, of whom he was son-in-law, and by the King of Naples, by whose troops those of the pope being beaten, the latter thought no longer fit to continue the war†.

38\* From the expressions of Lorenzo, in relating this marriage, we discover that it was a matrimony of convenience, in which, as the English writer of the Life of Lorenzo has noted, the heart took no part: "I Lorenzo took for wife Clarice, daughter of Sign. Jacopo Orsini, or was given to me." We do not know how the translator has distorted the sense with an inopportune note.

† Cron. di Bologna Rer. Ital. tom. 18. Ammir. Ist. lib. 23.

The infirmities of Peter de Medicis were now leading him slowly to the tomb; languor of body produced that of mind, and as well of this, as of Lorenzo's youth, his cunning adherents frequently made abuse. The malady still increasing, he died on the 2nd of December, at the age of fifty-three. He was a man endowed with excellent moral qualities; his infirmities allowed him not to show the talent he had received from nature. His government was short; the care his father took to recommend him to follow the counsels of others, shows that he valued not greatly his capacity, which is confirmed by the inconsolable grief he suffered in the death of his second son John, whom he considered more adapted to maintain the glory of the family. Whatever might be the merit of Peter, it was his misfortune to find himself placed between two most luminous characters, Cosmo and Lorenzo, who entirely eclipsed the weak light he could throw out. He continued his protection towards learned men and letters, either from his own sentiment, or in order to follow the example shown by his father.

So well was the power of the house of Medicis now established, that although Lorenzo and Julian were still minors, no innovation was made. They had been recommended by their dying father to Thomas Soderini a citizen known as the first for prudence, ability and political talents. He imitated not the bad faith of Neroni; but having convoked the principal citizens in Saint Anthony's, he pointed out to them, in an eloquent argument, that if they wished to remain alike tranquil at home, and respected abroad, it was necessary to obey the established order of government, to honour and consider the house of Medicis as the first in the republic, as the most powerful in riches, and the strongest in adherents; and that if they thought of humiliating this

house, intestine discords would arise, from which their foreign enemies alone would derive advantage. Lorenzo addressed them also with so much dignity and wisdom, that the whole world conceived the highest opinion of him; nature, indeed, had been to him a step-mother in external qualities; she had given him no beauty of form, a short sight, and from the narrowness of his nose, so unmelodious a voice, that he appeared always hoarse, but she had made him every ample compensation in the endowments of the mind. Julian had been treated better, but the short time he lived, allowed him not to show

what he was worth\*. He continued to advise in  
 1470. public affairs<sup>‡</sup> not only with Soderini, but with the most respectable citizens, and in order to draw from them their true sentiments, he had the adroitness of interrogating them separately, not united in council, where either regards or diffidence, or the wish of surpassing others so frequently prevent men declaring their genuine opinions. Lorenzo, by consulting them separately when he was in doubt, when he found more than one who advised the same measure, was wont, for the most part, to adhere to it; a method which would deserve to be imitated†.

Florence now remained tranquil, and only a trifling commotion took place in Prato, which was excited by the imprudence of Bernard Nardi, one of the outlaws. Irritated at the miserable state to which he was reduced by the last conspiracy, he wished to attempt a desperate

\* Nardi Ist. Fior. lib. 1.—Ammir. in the “Ritratti” relates that some of his friends seeing him masked, said to him who is this man that carries the countenance above the mask? which shows that he was not morose.

† Michael Bruti. Hist. Fior. lib. 5.

blow, by making himself master of the city of Prato, and with this point of support, again rouse the enemies of the Florentines to a war. He consulted with Neroni, who, although he saw the great difficulty which attended the enterprise, encouraged him by giving him hope for succour from Bologna and Ferrara. It was not only difficult to occupy that city, but when occupied, more difficult to maintain it, in the close vicinity of the capital, and waiting for distant succours. Bernard, having gained the minds of some Pratese, and of many malecontents of the district of Pistoia, caused the mayor to be requested to give up the keys of the gate at night, for a person who wished to enter, a favour usually granted; when entering inconsiderately with a few followers, he had the boldness to occupy the palace, and make the mayor Petrucci prisoner, scour the place, and declare it free. He was, however, followed by no one; which being seen by George Ginori Jerusalemite Chevalier, who happened to be there by accident, the latter attacked him, made him prisoner, and brought him to Florence, where he was beheaded\*.

\* Macchiav. Ist. lib. 7. Cron. Bolognese. Ammir. lib. 23.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE VENETIANS LOSE NEGROPONTE.—PERSONAGES WHO TRAVEL IN ITALY.—THE COURT OF MILAN SPENDIDLY RECEIVED IN FLORENCE.—DEATH OF PAUL II.—ELECTION OF SIXTUS IV. —VOLTERRA REBELS FROM THE FLORENTINES.—VIOLENT DEATH OF THE DUKE OF MILAN.—DANGEROUS STATE OF THE FLORENTINE REPUBLIC IN CASE OF WAR.

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**W**HILST trifling wars, which were excited by causes still more insignificant, were continually tearing Italy to pieces, and keeping her numerous principalities and little republics divided, the destroyer of the Greek empire proceeded with his conquests in Greece, and approached Italy. The Italian princes appeared to slumber in face of danger, awakening themselves only at the sudden burst of any great event more alarming than usual, as for instance, in the year 1453, at the capture of Constantinople. At that period, indeed, they formed confederacies against the common enemy, but soon relapsed into their wonted lethargy. In this year another alarming misfortune shook them again, the capture of the island of Negroponte, lost by the Venetians. This island is the old Eubœa, and a very slender arm of the sea divides it from ancient Achaia. According to the usual obscure tradition, it is related that like Spain from Africa, Sicily from Italy, so Eubœa had been separated from the continent by an earthquake. The island was both populous and abounding in the products of the soil, and commerce, and was one of the richest Venetian establishments. The island was attacked, by Maho-

met II., with a force, probably, exaggerated by writers\*. According to their testimony, three hundred ships conveyed 70,000 warriors, whilst an innumerable army advanced by land against it. If the measures of precaution, taken by the Venetians when the siege began, had been taken before, this important island would, probably, have been saved. They had only a fleet of about thirty-five galleys, which was obliged to retire in face of the enemy. The Turks made a bridge of boats, which connected the island with the continent; and attacked the strong principal city, the ancient Chalcis, with the same facility as a city of the continent. If the fleet, prepared and increased in time, (which would have been very easy for that powerful republic) had ruined the bridge with the artillery, the Turks would have found themselves in great embarrassment. Canale, the admiral, was indeed accused of this error, and consequently disgraced. He is said to have been advised by the greater part to drive the ships against the bridge, and thus attempt to ruin it when the Turkish fleet moved off: the Turks dreaded him, and Mahomet wished to retire to terra firma; but was detained by an officer, who represented to him the discouragement which such a proceeding would inevitably produce in the soldiers. Canale, in order to effect this, or some other enterprise, chose to await a reinforcement of ships, which arrived the day after the fall of the place. The besieged defended themselves with indescribable bravery. From the

\* Sanuto Istor. of the Doges Rer. Ital. script. tom. 22. Bolognese Chronicle, tom 18. It is true that these two writers that were not read, the Bolognese Chronologist cotemporary, and the other a little later agree in the number of the armed, and the killed. Sabellico, also a synchronic writer, lessens the land army, and brings the whole to a more proper measure.



25th of June to the 11th of July, four horrible assaults were made, by the Turks, upon the city; the number of their slain exceeds every belief, but where the execution of orders is accompanied, either by the favour of the prince, or by death, resolution becomes terrible. In the fourth and last assault, the Turks entered the city across a large piece of ruined wall. The desperate inhabitants defended it hand by hand, but the greater part of them were exterminated by the Ottoman sword. Many of the principal nobles were slain, and amongst them Erizzo, whom Mahomet had promised his life, was crushed between two boards.

The news of this misfortune filled Italy with terror. The pontiff invited all the Italian powers to an alliance against the Turk, which the greater part joined: but that fervour, kindled at the moment of the occurrence of so painful an event, was soon extinguished, and they relapsed into their old lethargy. The Florentines, from decorum, lent their name to the alliance, but took care to take no active part in it. They beheld, with a secret pleasure, the misfortunes and diminution of power which the Venetians, their rivals in commerce, suffered, and the Florentine nation enjoyed particular favour from Mahomet II., which, at once, made her respected, and enabled her freely to carry on commerce in his dominions\*. In the same city of Negroponte, too, the Florentines maintained rich magazines, filled with silks and cloth, and their persons and properties were saved in the common devastation†.

\* See the Third Essay upon the Commerce of the Florentines.

† So much is collected from the Chronicle of Benedict Dei, a cotemporary writer, and who had known Mahomet II., and spoken with him. The Chronicle is reported by Pagnini (Decima). He assures us that in Negroponte there were not less than *fifty trading*

At this period, when Italy was almost enjoying a profound tranquillity, various illustrious personages commenced travelling through it, who were attracted either by curiosity, or the love of ostentation. About two years before, the Emperor Frederick III. made his appearance, but he travelled without any display of luxury, and only with a small retinue, scarcely worthy of an emperor. He went to Rome to pay a vow. In this year the Duke Borso, so celebrated for his riches, magnificence, and learning, undertook a journey to Rome, displayed the greatest pomp in that city, and died upon his return. The Duke of Milan, probably, wishing to emulate him, chose also to make an ostentatious journey, and repaired to Florence under the pretext of a vow.

<sup>1471.</sup> The Court of Milan, although established by a prince like Duke Francis, who had lived always amidst arms, had adopted a luxury, and an Asiatic pomp, a proof of which was given at Florence, where Galeazzo Maria repaired with his wife. He caused to be conducted thither, for the service of the duchess and her ladies, twelve cars covered with cloths of gold and silver, which were carried over the Alps upon the backs of mules; fifty beautiful riding ponies led by the hand; fifty fine coursers with harness of gold; five hundred couple of dogs; a great number of falcons, the ornaments of which consisted of silver, gold and gems. The courtiers and others formed a suite of 2,000 horse. The duke and duchess were lodged and treated by Lorenzo in his magnificent palace, where the duke certainly found riches not inferior, but elegance and taste far superior to what

*companies or large places of the Florentines, with the sum of 400,000 florins, three galleys, and 8,000 pieces of cloth, and silk tapestry of gold, seven hundred individuals, and that all was saved.*

he displayed. The pious Florentines, absorbed in the devotion of Lent, were somewhat scandalized by the frequent banquets and public festivals which daily occurred, but, in order to make them correspond with the season of penance, they were converted into sacred sights. In lieu of balls, of tournaments, three sacred shows were ordered with the same pomp and apparatus as the former would have been given with. In St. Felix the spectacle of the annunciation of the Virgin was given; in the Carmine, that of the Saviour's ascension to heaven; in the Holy Ghost, that of the coming of the Holy Ghost. During this latter spectacle, the material fire, which represents the celestial, set the church in flames, and great part of it was destroyed\*.

In this year Pope Paul II. died. His first avocation had been that of a merchant: in order to follow this, he had already embarked his baggage, when the news of the election to the pontificate of his maternal uncle, Condulmiero, or Eugene IV., made him change his profession, and devote himself to the church†. He left behind him no very meritorious memory. He gained a celebrity by no means honourable, from having persecuted a society of many innocent learned men, whom he took for an assembly of conspirators. A first mistake is pardonable, in dangerous times, as those were, but the obstinate cruelty with which they were persecuted so long a time, by his not having confessed the error, is revolting to humanity. The election of the new pope fell upon the Cardinal of San Piero in Vinculo, son of a fisherman of Savona, who caused himself to be titled

\* Platina, Life of Paul.

† See Tiraboschi, who speaks at length of it: Corio, the *Chronicle of Bologna* and Ammirato.

**Sixtus IV.** Although of low birth, he soon evinced an extraordinary lust of domination, and of raising his own race, particularly Peter and Jerome Riario, whom decorum called his nephews, but the public voice his sons\*. Peter was created cardinal, with a very rich appendage; Jerome married Catherine Sforza, natural daughter of the Duke Francis of Milan, and received Imola in dowry; but the pope was preparing for him greater grandeur. This pope was destined to become one of the most ferocious persecutors of the house of Medicis, although he began by shewing himself their greatest favourer. Lorenzo was sent amongst the six ambassadors to compliment him. The pope expressed the great sentiments of friendship he bore towards the house of Medicis, which were not merely words, but facts; for he created the servants of the trading firm of Medicis his treasurers, and farmed out to them the rich mines of the Tolfa, making an addition of an elegant present of two antique heads of Augustus and Agrippa, which were most acceptable to Lorenzo. From all the favours he shewed the house, we perceive his ardent desire to obtain for himself the good opinion of the family, and through them the Florentine republic, wishing, probably, she should serve the designs he entertained, of the aggrandizement of the family Riario†. The close  
 1472. friendship, however, began soon to grow cold, probably from the pope not having adhered to his promise of creating Julian, brother of Lorenzo, a cardinal, and was afterwards converted into the most bitter hatred.

\* It was believed they were rather sons than nephews.—Murat. Ann. d'Italia.

† Ammir. lib. 23. Valori Life of Lorenzo. Fabbroni Life of Lorenzo, notes 30, 31, 32.

During the general peace, the city of Volterra had rebelled against the Florentines. Some mines of alum, which were found in the neighbourhood\*, were the cause of this. The community of Volterra had given them in farm to Benuccio Cappucci, a Siennese, with whom other persons were associated, and particularly Florentines. Either on account of the exorbitant gain made by the associates, or whatever else was the motive, the Volterranean public pretended, shortly afterwards, to a right to break the contract, for not being made with the proper formalities, nay, with fraud. Having, therefore, excited a lively agitation of the question, it was ordered by the public magistrate, that it should be referred to the opinion of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who accepted the compromise, but before the decision was known, the disputes continuing in the city, tumults arose, in which many persons were killed, and the Florentine rulers insulted. Deputies were then sent to Florence, but more to maintain the justice of their cause, than to ask any excuse, finishing by declaring, that the city would remain faithful to the republic, if, throwing into oblivion what was past, no rigour was had recourse to†. It was disputed in Florence whether the tumult ought to be quelled by a general oblivion and a tacit pardon, or the Volterrans were to be obliged to give themselves up to the will of the Florentines. Thomas Soderini was of the former opinion, but Lorenzo de Medicis was of the

\* They are described by the Cancell. Ivano. By the road that goes over the hill of Bruciano to Matra on the right, the parish church of Commensano, &c.—See Cecin. Ist. di Volterra, with Comments of the Chev. Flamm. del Borgo.

† Cecin. loc. cit. There the public documents are referred to; hence more credit is given to them than to Ammirato and others, who relate the fact differently.

latter, and laid before them, that by yielding they would set an example of weakness, which would have given courage to places subject to revolt. His opinion was followed. Frederic d'Urbino was sent against Volterra with a sufficient body of troops, surrounded by which, that unfortunate city was obliged to capitulate. But the licentiousness indulged in by the soldiers suffered not the agreements to be fulfilled, and a sacking of the place, at once horrible to the inhabitants, and disgraceful to the conquerors, proved the desolation of the city\*. The commandant, who, probably, could not prevent it, chose not to participate in the booty, but in the robbery of one book†, evinced, in the midst of arms, his taste for letters. In order to console the afflicted city, Lorenzo went there in person, scattered his treasures, 1473. but ordered the construction of a fortress, the more to secure her dependance‡.

The authority Lorenzo had acquired in all Europe, and the fame of his wisdom, appears, besides the many proofs he had already given, from the entreaties made to him by Louis XI., King of France, to demand of Ferdinand, King of Naples, his daughter in marriage for

\* Macchiav. Ist. lib. 7. Ammir. Ist. lib. 25. Anton. Ivanus, De Bello Volat. Rer. Ital. tom. 25. Fabb. Life Lauren. note 34. It is to be observed, that Anthony Ivano, whose work is quoted, was chancellor in Volterra, and therefore to him may be attributed, either the want of formality in the contract, or the frauds which the Volterrans complain of; wherefore his detail does not deserve full credit.

† This was a code of the Bible, written in Hebrew, which, as a document, he caused to be placed in his celebrated library, supported by an eagle.

‡ The church of St. Peter was levelled with the palace of the bishop, and there was built the new tower; behind that the celebrated tower was erected, called the Maschio, with the prisons.

the dauphin; and probably this king, whose conduct made him as odious to his own people as to strangers, was not sincere in the treaty, and demanding as condition, that Ferdinand should ally himself with him against the King of Arragon, he entertained secondary views, for which the proposed matrimony was a pretext which he could break off at his option. Ferdinand modestly remonstrating, that he could not, without dishonour, declare himself against his uncle, the King of Arragon, declined the insidious treaty. If that marriage however, had taken place, there is every reason to suppose, that Italy would have avoided the evils she suffered in the invasion of Charles VIII., who, being the person who was to marry the daughter of Ferdinand, would not have marched to despoil his father-in-law of his kingdoms\*.

The close ties of friendship, which appeared to exist between the pope and the King of Naples, had given rise to jealousy between the two republics of Florence and Venice. The latter had discovered, too, that the King of Naples was his competitor for the kingdom of Cyprus, by endeavouring to make his son Frederic marry the queen dowager of King James. As she was descended from the family Cornaro, she was selected particularly by the senate, in order to keep that island in dependance, which was occupied finally by the Venetians. Their celebrated general, Frederic d'Urbino, had been, moreover, seduced from the service of the Florentines, and paying little regard to decorum, had entered those of the king and the pope. The Florentines had taken Robert Malatesta into their pay, and, mak-

\* See the two letters of Louis XI., and the answer of Ferdinand, to Lorenzo, taken from the Medicean archive, and mentioned in the notes to the Life of Lorenzo, of Fabbroni, note 37.

ing an alliance with the Perugians and the Manfredi, Lords of Faenza, took every care to keep their confines better defended. Little harmony had<sup>1474.</sup> hitherto prevailed between Florence and Venice, but interest both forms and destroys alliances. The Florentines, therefore, united with the Venetians, and the Duke of Milan joined them as a third, leaving room also for the pope and the King of Naples; a measure resorted to, probably, only to discover their real dispositions. They publicly commended the alliance, but abstained from joining it.

The jubilee that Sixtus chose to celebrate, and shortened the duration of, by reducing it to the period of twenty-five years, attracted no great crowd to Rome. The King of Naples repaired thither, more from political intrigues than from devotion, and bound himself with stronger ties to the pope, who looked only to the exaltation of his nephews. These two alliances appeared to the eyes of politicians a prelude to approaching hostilities. The former of them, however, received no little blow, in the violent death of the Duke of Milan, which very much disheartened the Florentines, of whom he was the natural ally, more than of the Venetians, and a particular friend of the house of Medicis. Three young men, Charles Visconti, Jerome Olgiato, and John Andrew Lampugnano, imprudently formed a conspiracy against him. They had been educated by Colas Montano, the Bolognese, master of the Latin language in Milan\*. In explaining the Latin classics, many of which, written in the republican times of Rome, breathed only

\* He is said to have been ordered to be whipped by the duke, for true or supposed crimes. Others say that the duke, when a boy, having had him for a master, and been flogged by him, chose thus to take revenge.



sentiments of liberty, and detestation of tyrants, he directed their attention particularly to the most animated passages, applying the sense of them to the sovereign, who, stained both with public and private vices, deserved, in truth, the name of tyrant. The imaginations of these young men became inflamed to a degree, that, without either procuring the necessary means, or taking measures for a revolution, they resolved upon his death, inferring, from the rumours of discontent, that all were animated, like themselves, with one sentiment of freedom, and that, the tyrant once dead, the people would do the rest. The duke was accustomed, on St. Stephen's day, to go solemnly to the temple of that Saint, at the entrance of which the three conspirators, having posted themselves, armed with poniards, attacked him as he passed, pierced him with many wounds, and left him dead in the midst of his courtiers. Two of the conspirators, Lampugnano and Visconti, were struck down by the followers of the duke, but Olgiato succeeded in saving himself, and endeavoured to leave Milan in disguise; but being discovered, and arrested, he died by the hands of the executioner, in the twenty-third year

<sup>1477.</sup> of his age, boasting of his enterprise, like a Brutus or a Cassius\*. This event was more important than it appeared, to the tranquillity of Italy. The eldest son, John Galeazzo, was only eight years old; and, although peaceably acknowledged as duke, the tricks, the intrigues, and bad faith of his uncles, afterwards involved Italy in new misfortunes, and caused the ruin of the house of Sforza.

Tuscany, however, was quiet, and the movement excited by Charles of Montone, natural son of Braccio, was

\* Bernard. Corio. Istor. Milanese. Macchiav. Istor. Fior. lib. 7.

only ephemeral. Panting after novelty, he had left the command of the Venetians, to endeavour to make himself master of Perugia, once possessed by his father: being driven therefrom, he attacked the Siennese, under pretext of the large sums they owed his father, who, thinking the Florentines the instigators of Charles, complained to them of him. In order to prove the sincerity of the republic, the Florentines ordered Charles to withdraw, who, returning to the service of the Venetians, tranquillity was again restored\*. Politicians, however, remained with their minds in suspense, observing the two alliances which had been already for some time established. In the case of a rupture, the strongest appeared to be that of the pope with the King of Naples, the interests of which were perfectly in unison. The other three allies were not so well united, nor did the minority of the Duke of Milan promise much energy. The Venetians, rivals in the commerce and in the power of the Florentines in Italy, could not cordially like their interests, and a republic founded upon stable principles, and which is not subject to the voluble vicissitudes and caprices of a principality, still kept in mind the injury pretended to have been received from the Florentines, when, aiding the Duke Francis to conquer Milan, the latter prevented them making themselves masters of that flourishing state. Whence, in the case of war, the Florentines, being the first exposed to the forces of two powerful allies, had every thing to dread from their power, and little to hope from subsidies or assistance.

\* Ammir. Ist. Fior. lib. 23.

## CHAPTER VII.

ENMITY OF SIXTUS IV. TOWARDS THE MEDICIS.—CONSPIRACY OF THE FAMILIES RIARIO AND PAZZI AGAINST THE LIVES OF THE MEDICIS.—JULIAN IS KILLED, AND LORENZO SAVED.—DECREES AGAINST THE FAMILY OF THE PAZZI.—THE KING OF NAPLES AND THE POPE ORDER THEIR ARMIES TO MARCH AGAINST THE FLORENTINES.—THE POPE'S INTERDICT.—SYNOD OF FLORENCE.—OPERATIONS OF THE WAR.—IRRUPTION OF THE TURKS INTO FRIULI.—DEATH OF DONAT ACCIAJOLI.—VICTORY OF THE FLORENTINES OVER THE TROOPS OF THE POPE AT THE LAKE OF PERUGIA.—SURRENDER OF COLLE.—REVOLUTION IN THE GOVERNMENT OF MILAN.—LORENZO OF THE MEDICIS GOES TO NAPLES.—SUCCEEDS IN THE PURPOSES OF HIS EMBASSY.—HIS LETTER TO THE SIGNIORY.—RECEPTION OF LORENZO IN NAPLES.—TREATY BETWEEN FERDINAND AND THE FLORENTINES.—RETURN OF LORENZO.—MAHOMET II. GETS POSSESSION OF OTRANTO. DEATH OF MAHOMET.—HIS CHARACTER.—EMBASSY OF THE FLORENTINES TO THE POPE.

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**A** HORRIBLE attempt to exterminate the family of the Medicis, preceded a war that was to have  
<sup>1478.</sup> brought the Florentine power to the brink of ruin ; an attempt to which, if we consider the actors who were engaged in it, the place where it occurred, and the circumstances which attended it, we shall hardly find another similar in the page of history. The pope, at this time, detested the family of the Medicis as much as he had shewn himself their friend at the beginning of his pontificate. He had endeavoured to gain the favour of this family, for the more certain aggrandizement

of his nephew or son, Count Jerome Riario; but Lorenzo, thinking it contrary to the interests of the republic, had at times openly, at times secretly, opposed it. After the loss of Imola, by Taddeo Manfredi, Lorenzo in vain used all his efforts to prevent it falling into the hands of Riario. The pontiff was not ignorant that secret aid had been given by the Florentines to Nicholas Vitelli, lord of the city of Castello, who had opposed both the orders of the pope to send back the outlaws, and his arms. The pope, of a ferocious and lofty character, seeing the hostile intentions of the Medicis against his house, had conceived a bitter hatred towards them, of which he now gave the most evident demonstrations. The Archbishopric of Pisa being vacant, he conferred it, against the wishes of the Florentines, upon Francis Salviati, who was a capital enemy of the Medicis, and the Florentine government, for a time, prevented his taking possession of it\*. The pope, on the other hand, took away from the Medicis the treasurership of Rome, and gave it to Francis Pazzi, a family in enmity with the other: for ages back the Pazzi had ruled over many castles in the Vale of Arno (Valdarno) had ventured, with other lords, to contend with the Florentine republic, but finally became her citizens. The family was now divided into two branches. The one comprehended Galeotto, Regnard, Andrew, Nicholas, and John, whilst the other was formed of William, Francis, and John, besides the elder James, considered as the head of the family. Cosmo, whose foresight made him acquainted with the rivalry and power of this family,

\* It had been vacated, and conferred, in 1474, and only in the year before the possession of it had been given him by the Florentine republic.

endeavoured to unite it with his own, by giving Bianca the sister of Lorenzo in marriage to William Pazzi. Ties of consanguinity indeed were formed, but not those of friendship. The anxiety of exclusive domination on one side, jealousy and rivalry on the other, not only kept the two houses diffident towards each other, but decidedly hostile. Lorenzo pretended that they were dependant upon him, and the Pazzi disdained to acknowledge such dependance, and the latter were deprived of all share in the government. They had suffered, moreover, various wrongs. John Pazzi was entitled to the considerable estates of John Borromeo, having married his only surviving daughter; this inheritance, however, was contended for by Charles, the nephew of Borromeo, and through the influence of Lorenzo, Pazzi was deprived of it\*. Enmities were continually increasing: the most angry and irritable was Francis, who lived in Rome the greater part of the year, carrying on commerce and filling the office of pontifical treasurer, which gave him opportunity of having frequent conferences with Count Jerome, who bore no less hatred to the Medicis, knowing that they were contrary to his establishment, and that at the death of the pope, they would do every thing to ruin him; which was the more easy for them to effect, by the alliance with the Venetians. During one of these frequent discourses, it was resolved upon to exterminate the Medicis, and various projects were started to carry the purpose into effect†. It was necessary to murder both the brothers

\* Almost all historians assert the same; there exists, however, some document to the contrary.

† Count Jerome endeavoured to attract Lorenzo to Rome by an artful letter, wherein he wished to persuade him that his presence would dissipate every shadow of dislike that might exist in the mind

at one time, as if one survived, the blow would be of no avail.

After various deliberations, the plan of one of the most atrocious conspiracies was conceived which the page of history has to recount. In order to concert measures better, Francis came to Florence to induce James to favour the design, and although at first he was adverse to it, the authority of the pope finally persuaded him to join the conspiracy\*. It was easy to murder the two brothers Medicis, who frequently were in the habit of walking through the city without arms, and unattended either by guards or domestics, but it was not so easy to effect a change in the government without foreign forces, to move which towards Tuscany, would have excited suspicion. The circumstance, however, of the illness of the Lord of Faenza, gave them an opportunity of marching 2,000 horse, and at the same time, of sending John Baptist Montesecco to Florence, a general of the pope and of Count Riario, who was to be one of the principal actors in the horrid enterprise†. Besides

of the pope towards him. See the letter of Count Jerome of the fifteenth January, 1478, mentioned by Fabbroni, *Vita Laur.* n. 67. That he afterwards entertained a bad design against Lorenzo if he had gone there, see the confession of Montesecco, amongst the documents of this conspiracy, mentioned by so many, and particularly in the most authentic, *Della Scala, Excusatio, &c.* Lorenzo appears not to have absolutely refused the invitation, but took care not to go there.

\* Read the same confession of Montesecco. This James Pazzi painted in such black colours, by Angelo Poliziano, was, perhaps, the least infamous of the conspirators; at least, it does him honour, that the day before the execution of the conspiracy, in the uncertainty of the event, and not wishing to make others feel his misfortune, if the blow failed, he paid all his debts, and consigned to the proprietors the goods that were in his name, either in his own house, or in the custom-house.

† He had been before in Florence, in order to excite James Pazzi

these, Salviati, the Archbishop of Pisa, was one of the most bitter enemies of Lorenzo; and among the other conspirators was Jacob Poggio, who gave so scandalous a proof of the base ingratitude, which he was guilty of, since he was the son of the secretary and historian Poggio, who had received so many benefits from, and had been so greatly elevated by, the family of the Medicis\*. To these may be added the two James Salviati, the one the brother, the other the nephew of the archbishop; Napoleon Francesi of St. Germignano, a client and adherent of the family of the Pazzi, and Bernardo Bandini, the most daring and resolute man of all, whose dilapidated patrimony and needy situation induced him to be guilty of any enormity. A young man, nephew of Count Jerome Riario, who was at the university of Pisa, had been just created cardinal. He was called to Florence, in order that they might bring together the two brothers Medicis, at the same place, in any festival or banquet that was given to him. The cardinal stopped at a place near Florence, called the Loggia of the Pazzi, and was thence invited by Lorenzo to his villa of Fiesole, where Poliziano also was with the little Peter, son of Lorenzo; but, as Julian was not present, the moment was not thought opportune. They caused the cardinal to say he should like to hear mass the following day in the Holy Mary of the Flower, (*Santa Maria del Fiore*), and see the rich furniture of the house of Medicis. He was, therefore, invited by Lorenzo, and

to the enterprise, and having treated with Lorenzo of the affairs of Count Jerome, had conceived for him a great esteem. See the same confession.

\* He was now secretary of the Cardinal Riario; had already written a commentation of the Triumph of Fame, dedicated to Lorenzo.

the most sumptuous preparations were made to receive him. The conspirators, however, knowing that Julian would not be either this morning at the banquet, but only at mass, resolved upon carrying the blow into execution whilst they were attending the latter, not thinking it prudent to defer it any longer, both because the conspiracy was already known to too many persons, and on that day the pontifical troops, in number of 2,000 horse, led on by Tolentino and Lorenzo of Castello, had orders to approach Florence. This day of ferocity and horror, was the 26th April, the Sunday before the ascension. It was decided, that the moment for the execution should be that, when the priest was giving the communion\*. Montesecco, however, who had unwillingly undertaken to murder Lorenzo, terrified at the place and moment of carrying the blow into effect, refused to be concerned in it. Piovano of Montemurlo, Stephen Bagnoni, and Anthony Maffei of Volterra, who still felt sore at heart, for the sacking which had been made of his native place, undertook the duty. These ten were destined to kill Lorenzo, and Francis Pazzi and Bandini, Julian†. Matters thus arranged, the cardinal came to the church, taking his place as usual in the pulpit, and at the same time, the two brothers Medicis appeared. The moment of the execution having arrived, Bandini stabbed Julian in the

\* Nine or ten writers upon this conspiracy do not agree, some asserting that the intended moment was that of giving the consecrated wafer, others the communion. I have followed Poliziano, who was present.

† Some say, that Julian delaying his arrival, Pazzi and Bandini went to his house to hasten him, and caressing him, endeavoured to find if he had any armour under him, and talking of youthful and amusing matters, led him to the temple, and placed themselves beside him. So says Macchiavel. Valori doubtfully says Ferunt (*Vita Laurent.*) Poliziano, an ocular witness, does not speak of it.



breast with a short dagger, who immediately fell dead, while Francis Pazzi, throwing himself upon the body, continued giving it so many useless blows, with so much fury, that he wounded himself badly in the leg. Anthony and Stephen, at the same time, assailed Lorenzo; but, either that the latter foresaw the blow, and avoided it; either that, as sometimes happens, he accidentally moved when the blow was aimed at him, or that he was defended by those who stood around him, the first blow failed, and he was only slightly wounded in the neck, when, raising himself courageously, he drew his sword, and throwing his mantle over his left arm, began to defend himself, assisted by Andrew and Lorenzo Cavalcanti, his domestics, the former of whom was wounded. People hastening to the spot, and surrounded by his followers, he was taken into the vestry, and the doors shut, and was thus defended from the fury of Bandini, who, after having murdered Julian, and Francis Nore, a great friend of the house of Medicis, was in search of Lorenzo, to complete the crime. The noise and tumult which prevailed in the church, could not be described.

In the mean time, a band of the partisans of the Medici had assembled at the gates of the vestry, asking loudly for Lorenzo. Sigismond Stufa\*, a great friend of the Medicis, getting up before the vestry, recognised the insignia of his friends; the gates were then opened, and Lorenzo was taken home.

During all this, the Archbishop Salviati, who, according to the plan concerted upon, was to murder or im-

\* This young man is probably the same, at the death of whose wife, Albiera Albizzi, Poliziano wrote the very elegant elegy, where he has spoken of the festivals made at Florence for St. John's, and very full of imagination, has personified the malignant fever. His father was to have been on the morning at the banquet with the cardinal.

prison the signiory, had moved before the execution of the deed, taking with him many persons, amongst whom were the outlaws of Perugia and Poggio. Arrived at the palace, he left some followers at the gate, in order that when a rumour was raised, they might occupy it. The archbishop went to speak to the gonfalonieri, whilst the other followers hid themselves in the chancery, and were unintentionally shut up in it, as the doors were so constructed, that, when shut, they could not even be opened on the inside, without the keys. Cæsar Petrucci, the gonfaloniere, who was dining in company with the signiory, hearing of the arrival of the archbishop, got up from table, and went to receive him in another room. Having taken their seats, the archbishop, (who, in order to arrest him and the remainder of the signiory, was in vain expecting his companions, who, as they were shut up, could not come forward,) began, in a confused manner, to speak so unconnectedly, changing his colour, turning himself frequently towards the door, and coughing, that the gonfaloniere, who was accustomed to conspiracies and tumults, having been already in great danger at Prato, suspected what was really the case; and darting out at the door, found Poggio, seized him by the hair, and threw him on the ground, when, at the same time, calling for aid, he arrested the archbishop, and some of his followers. Those who were below, hearing the clamour, had occupied the principal gate, but were so divided they could not assist each other.

A tumult was at the same time heard in the square, when James Pazzi appeared who, instead of Francis, who was disabled by his wound, had placed himself at the head of his followers, and called upon the people to assert their liberty. He was pelted from the windows of the palace with stones, insulted by the people, who were

too much attached to the liberality displayed by the house of Medicis, and loaded even with opprobrium by his own brother-in-law, Serristori.

The signiory, hearing of the tragic event of Julian from the windows, having regained the gate, and taken the remainder of the suite of the archbishop, put a part of them to death, by hanging them without loss of time to the windows of the palace, amongst whom were the archbishop and Poggio. The young cardinal, who was a passive instrument in this tragedy, without knowing it, had been saved with difficulty, in the church, from the fury of the people, and conducted safely to the house of the Medicis, thence into the convent of the Nunziata; and, on the 12th June was suffered to depart for Rome\*. Almost all the city hastened to the house of Lorenzo, in order to get tidings of him, crying out the well-known and friendly word, *Palle, palle*, the arms of the Medicis. He came to the window with his neck bound round, thanking the people, and advising them to act with moderation, since the conspirators, and suspected persons even, were apprehended on all sides. The house of the Pazzi was the first to be attacked by the plebeians. Francis was there alone, and wounded in bed. Taken out by force, naked, and half alive to the palace, he was hanged at the same window, and over the body of the archbishop, which latter only half dead, stuck his teeth into the naked breast of Francis, and was found with the breast between them clenched by the convulsions of death, with his eyes furiously open, when the bodies were let down into the square. The two James Salviati met with the same fate: all the Pazzi were taken, who were either concealed in Florence, or whilst they were

\* Code 67 of the Florentine abbey, quoted by Fabbroni.

flying, together with Montesecco, and many of his people; nor were others saved than Bernardo Bandini and Napoleon Francesi. The two assassins, Stephan and Maffei, who were destined to murder Lorenzo, being discovered in the abbey, where they had concealed themselves, were drawn out forcibly by the people, their ears and noses cut off, and, after being beaten incessantly with blows and stripes, were hanged; and scarcely could the people be prevented laying hands upon the friars, for having concealed them. All the remaining followers of the Pazzi, or of the archbishop and Montesecco, were put to death, to the number of seventy, and their members dispersed, or drawn through the streets.

But horrible above all description was the spectacle of the old James Pazzi. After the useless attempt he made to raise the people to rebellion, he took to flight; but being arrested, in passing the Apennines, by the people of the mountains, and brought to Florence, he had been hanged and buried in the tomb of his ancestors. The superstitious people, who thought his soul for ever lost, from the blasphemies which he was wont to make use of at play, and upon other occasions, began to murmur at his being buried in a sacred place, and attributed to this pretended sacrilege the continual heavy rains which afflicted the country. A crowd of country people repaired to Florence, and growing tumultuous, demanded that his body should be removed from the sacred depository. The weak or superstitious magistrates ordered it to be dug up and buried along the walls; but the boys, taking notice of the place, and excavating the earth, drew the body, with the halter round the neck, through Florence, took it to his own house, and nailed it to his own door. The magistrates ordered the body to be thrown into the Arno, but, being swollen from putre-

faction, it remained long upon the top of the water, carried along by the current; a melancholy spectacle of the reverse of fortune\*.

Montesecco, after a long examination, had his head taken off at the gate of Bargello. He unveiled the whole order of the conspiracy, which appeared to have been framed in Rome, between the Pazzi and Count Jerome, and that the pope was a party thereto. Besides the punishment, the conspirators received a more lasting infamy, by being painted upon the walls of the palace of the mayor, by the celebrated pencil of Andrew Castagno, hung up by the feet; and the skill of the painter, in thus giving a lively expression of the features and countenances, has attracted at all times a great crowd of spectators, who, in admiring the artist, have further execrated the traitors. At the same time, three figures in wax were modelled under the direction of Andrew Verrocchio, and dedicated to three churches†, and Anthony Pallajolo consecrated to the house of Medicis a more durable monument, two medals in bronze, with the heads of the two brothers. Julian was put to death in the twenty-fifth year of his age, leaving a natural son, Julian, who became pontiff‡.

\* The same superstitious follies are every where to be found. These same rains, by which Jacopo Pazzi was disinterred, continuing throughout the month of June, gave rise to a similar spectacle in Plaisance.—*Diar. Parmen. Rerum. Ital.* tom. 22.

† With the garments in which he received the wound, and with which he appeared at the window, in Chiarito, at the Nunziata, at Santa Maria degli Angeli d' Assisi. Vasari, *Life of Verrocchio*.

‡ Opinion is various upon the time of the birth of Julian. Some say that he was born after the death of his father, as may be seen in the documents quoted in the notes to the collection of writers upon the conspiracy of the Pazzi. Macchiavel and Cafferio Differ. The Chronicle of the Abbey is quoted, in which this child is said to have been

It was now decreed that the arms of the palace should be every where taken down ; that the name of the street should be abolished ; and the car with the machine of fireworks was no longer to be led from the cathedral to the house of the Pazzi, which ceremony either the truth or fable of an ancient event had, for a long time, confirmed to them\*.

The day following the execution of the conspiracy, it was announced that Francis of Tolentino had penetrated into the states of the republic, from the confines of Imola, of which he was governor, and Lorenzo from the city of Castello by the road of Sienna : but at the same time it was made known that John Bentivoglio, head of the Bolognese republic, who was a great friend of the Medicis, had marched to their aid on the side of the Mugello.

It would have been conformable to the dignity of the head of the Christian religion to have disapproved, at least, publicly, of so atrocious a crime ; his rage, however, at seeing the blow fail, was not mitigated by the

born a year ago ; that Anthony of St. Gallo went to advise Lorenzo that the boy was with him, born of one Gorini, a female friend of Julian, and that Lorenzo went to see him and left him to the care of Antonio down to his seventh year. Nardi, too, not quoted in that collection, says ; “ The boy was brought to the house of Medicis, when Lorenzo was hardly cured ; and if it had not been for the intercession and authority of the grandmother, Mona Lucrezia de’ Tornabuoni, who was very affectionate to her blood as naturally grandmothers are wont to be, he would probably not have been received, nor brought up as the son of Julian, &c.” Nardi, *Ist.*, lib. 6., adds further down, that by attestation of the brother of the woman, and of some friars, that woman was the true wife of Julian, wherefore there was no necessity of a dispensation to make him a cardinal.

\* The writers upon the conspiracy of the Pazzi are very numerous, and from all of them we have taken the accounts. They are, for the most part, collected in one volume, printed by Adimari in Naples.

restitution made to him of the nephew, and by the humble pardon solicited by the Florentines, for having put ecclesiastics to death: nay, when Donat. Acciajoli was sent to him to implore it, he found himself in danger of being shut up in the castle. He wished to attempt, by force, what he was not able to effect by stratagem. By exciting continually more the King of Naples, having made Frederic D' Urbino captain-general, and assembling as many troops as could be found, which were hastily sent forward into Tuscany, it became proved by fact, if other proofs were wanting, who were the authors of the atrocious action. The first hostilities were directed against the plundered property of the Florentines, confiscated by their enemies. The magazines, the banks, which these rich merchants possessed in the dominions of the pope and the King of Naples, offered an ample booty to their avidity. The Florentines prepared themselves against hostilities, and having elected the ten rulers of the war, amongst whom was Lorenzo, they employed all diligence to take troops and generals into their pay.

The Duke of Calabria, too, had already marched; and, uniting with the Duke of Urbino, by the road of Montepulciano, had attacked the states of the republic.

In the midst of these movements, in order that there might be no doubt of the author of the conspiracy, and the enmity he bore the Medicis, an herald arrives at Florence with a brief of Sixtus, wherein the thunders of the Vatican are fulminated against Lorenzo and the Florentine magistrates. The aid given to Vitelli and to Charles of Montone, and other vague and uncertain facts were adduced as motives of the pope's anger; some of which, although true, could not be maintained by evidence. The ecclesiastic then declaimed with all

emphasis\*, against the punishment and murder of the Archbishop of Pisa, and other excellent ecclesiastics, according to his opinion, without a word being mentioned throughout the brief of their atrocious crimes, concluding that the pope would not tolerate Lorenzo being the tyrant of the republic; that he had been obliged, on that account, to take up arms, not against the Florentines, but against Lorenzo; that if they would expel him, he offered them both spiritual and temporal peace, but upon a contrary decision, war; and placed the republic under excommunication. This measure, which produced a great effect in a city, for the most part, devoted to the pontiffs, and very religious, was taken, in order to throw the whole odium of the war upon Lorenzo. The latter, therefore, calling an assembly in the palace, of a great number of the citizens, told them, that if either his exile or his death, could save the country, he should not hesitate a moment to sacrifice himself to the public good: that it grieved him to see the Vicegerent of Christ, in such dangerous times, when all Europe was threatened by the Ottoman arms, instead of giving himself every care to unite the Christian princes in one common defence, direct his attention to the ruin of a miserable individual;

\* “*Furore succensi et diabolica suggestione vexati ac tanquam canes ad efferam rabiem ducti—proh dolor atque inauditum scelus!* in Archiepiscopum manus violentas inicere, quod ne dum referre, sed meminisse horremus, multosque alios presbiteros et ecclesiasticos viros bonæ conditionis et famæ partim suspendi . . . et deterrima Prioribus aggrediendo Raphaelem Cardinalem, quum missarum Solemnibus interesset capere et Capi mandares.” As if arresting his nephew Cardinal, (if it was a crime) had been worse than hanging the archbishop. In this furious bull who would believe it? are found the words, “*quum nos Salvatoris exemplo, cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere,*” &c.



concluding that he threw himself into their arms; and that, if they considered such a measure serviceable, he would retire from the city, and willingly yield to his bad fortune. The citizens were moved at his address, and encouraged him the more, by evincing themselves ready to support any war for so just a cause. The brief of Sixtus was answered with all the energy and dignity becoming a republican magistrate, and the confutation of the reproaches made therein, was not difficult. "You tell us, answer the Florentines, that you have our liberty at heart, that Lorenzo de Medicis is a tyrant, and you command us to expel him; but how shall we become free by obeying your commands? you call him a tyrant; the plurality of the citizens call him our protector, nor have we any one who surpasses him in true piety and religion." The cruel events of the conspiracy were then briefly touched upon, the assassination of Julian, the miraculous escape of Lorenzo, the cares taken to save the cardinal, his nephew; and the pope is asked whether these are the causes of his anger, when the services rendered to religion and the holy see, by the house of Medicis, are adduced. After the confutation of so many begging pretexts, the Florentines concluded by reminding him who he is, and what is his office\*, protesting, with all firmness, that the republic would fight with her greatest possible energy in the cause of liberty and religion†.

\* "Indue, indue, beatissime Pater, meliorem mentem," &c. See following note.

† Amongst so many documents that have been printed of the celebrated conspiracy of the Pazzi, this answer ought not to be neglected, the more so as the brief is mentioned by all. We have thought proper to mention it in the appendix, number 1., at the end of the volume, as it is found in the archive of the reformations, register of foreign letters.—"It has been printed a short time since, and copied

The interdict being thus held in contempt, which the most learned canons and theologists of Florence, and the university of Pisa, evinced to be unjust\*, and, therefore, insufficient, the churches were ordered to be kept open, divine service celebrated, and a communication of all that had passed was afterwards made to all the princes of Europe. The canons of history appear not to deny that, at the same time, a responsive synod to the brief of the pope was celebrated in the cathedral of Florence, although the fact appears to be doubted by some later historians. The autographical document is still to be found in the old Archive, written in the hand of Urbin, Bishop of Arezzo, with the day even of the celebration noted therein†. If it had been a project never executed, how could the date exist? The historian Macchiavel, who, at the event of the conspiracy of the Pazzi, was between his ninth and tenth year, asserts, with certainty, that the Synod was celebrated. Michael Bruto, although much later, who endeavours, with all his ability, to contradict him, also confirms the opinion of Macchiavel, and adds that the pontiff was highly indignant at it‡. These

in the Encyclopedic Magazine of M. Millin, April of this year 1814. It is to be remarked that the manuscript of this history is autograph, wherefore no doubt can arise that the author may have been preceded in the discovery of this important letter."

\* Bartholomew Socino, Francis Aretino, Lancillotto Deci, Bulgarino, Andrew Panormita, Pier Antonio Cornis, and others. The Aretine, for, his opinion, printed between *Consilia seu responsa*, found himself in great danger. In Sienna it was demanded by the ambassador of Naples, but denied and forbidden by the government.

† At the end "Datum in Ecclesia nostra Cathedrali S. Reparata, 23 July, 1478.

‡ The complaints, made by the pontiff, are detailed at length, Hist. Fior. lib. 7. "Postremo quum nondum sibi satis esse factum arbitrentur nisi in divinam et sacro sanctam potestatem sævirent, eorum

proofs amount to final evidence, added to our knowledge that the synod was at that time printed: and, although a timid respect shown towards the Holy see may have caused all the copies to have disappeared, one still existed, in modern days, and was seen by Doctor Lami in the library of Strozzi, which the devout possessor probably destroyed, not having, (as it appears,) permitted Lami to mention it\*. Now how are we to suppose that the Bishop Gentile dared to print a manifest imposture, and that no pious Florentine in that age, or subsequently, should accuse him of it, and transmit it to posterity? Nothing is wanting to complete the most evident demonstration, but to discover the letters of convocation, which, however, from the cause adduced, as well as the printed copies, may have been suppressed. And, in truth, the expressions, made use of in this synod, go beyond all the limits of that moderation and decency, so particularly proper for the calling of ecclesiastics.

The war of words and ecclesiastical censures being thus terminated, it became necessary to prepare for actual warfare.

*imperio per Hetruriæ pontifices, concilio indicto, adversus majorum mores, qui unum tantæ rei in terris auctorem Romanum pontificem perpetuo agnoverunt . . . . provocare ad gentium omnium futurum conventum," &c.* To all this may be added, that the most diligent Ammirato, who in his history, perhaps, for particular views, preserves a mysterious silence upon this article, asserts in his portraits, where he speaks with more frankness, that without doubt the council was celebrated.

\* Lami *lez d' Antichità Toscane*, preface page CXXXV. Another copy existed in Venice, in the library of the Count Trifone Urachiers, counsellor of the most serene republic. The Abbè Morelli, librarian of S. Marks, had that copy in his possession, and gives me an account of it in the letter which is copied in Document II, at the end of the volume.

The enemy's army, led on by the Duke of Calabria, and by Frederick D' Urbino, had already arrived on the Florentine territory, by the road of the Siennese, and the latter republic favoured the pope and the king of Naples, and halting at Montepulciano, appeared desirous of attempting a blow upon Valiano.

The Florentine troops were inferior in number by one third, and making only a march of observation, avoided every engagement. The enemy advancing, took possession of some little castles, and particularly the Castellina, a strong place, which detained him before it about forty days\*, and thus consumed a time, which proved so precious to the Florentines, who, in the mean time, received reinforcements, particularly from the Duke of Ferrara, who was declared captain-general. They had also taken other officers into their pay, viz., Orsino, Count of Pitigliano Ridolfo Gonzaga, &c. The aid, however, to be furnished by the Venetians was very tardy in arrival, and scantily furnished.

The King of Naples, seeing that important succours would be sent the Florentines from Milan, succeeded so far in occupying the attention of that government, and diverting it from the affairs of Tuscany, that Genoa rebelled against them, and returned to her usual government of a doge. The uncles of the Duke of Milan favoured this enterprise, who wishing to command during the minority of their nephew, and being obliged by the duchess, their mother, to depart, gave rise to this change in the government in concert with Robert Sanseverino. They derived not from it, however, the advantage they

\* Diarn Saesi d' Allegretto Allegrettie, *Rer. Italic.* tom. 23. Therein are found all the military operations day for day, the author being in action for the Siennese.

desired, because the duchess, thinking it more opportune to have peace, than war with the Genoese, entered into an agreement with them by giving up the Castelletto, whilst Sanseverino and his followers turned their attention to molest the Florentines on the side of Pisa. Nor did the two hostile powers stop here. In order the more to annoy the Duke of Milan, they excited the Swiss against him. They had, indeed, obliged themselves by oath, by means of a sum of money, to remain in peace with him, but the pope, who availed himself of all arms, even of the spiritual, had absolved them from all the ties of the oath, and, suddenly marching forward, they assailed the states of the duke; but, being repulsed by his generals, they found themselves obliged to raise the siege of Como, and had not a fortuitous accident intervened in their behalf, they would have been entirely destroyed by the garrison of Bellinzona\*.

So much were paltry interests and petty piques able to effect, that, whilst the common and most powerful enemy was threatening the whole of Italy, and the final extermination of the christian religion, a King of Naples, uniting himself with the head of that religion, in order to prevent the Venetians giving powerful succour to the Florentines, prevailed with his son-in-law, the King of Hungary, so far as to permit the passage of 15,000 Turkish horse to make an irruption into Friuli, placing Cividale under siege, which was bravely defended by Charles of Montone†.

The enemies of the Florentines, on the other side, were making progress, and closely straitening Mount San Savino, a place, on account of its position, of great importance. The Florentine army, greatly reinforced,

\* *Diar. Parm. Rer. Ital.* t. 22.

† *Piar. Parm.*

marched thither under the command of the Duke of Ferrara, and took up a position which might do great injury to the besiegers, who, in case they wished to fight, would have been obliged to accept battle with great disadvantage. They, therefore, sought to indemnify themselves by demanding a truce, which they scarcely hoped to obtain. They nevertheless obtained it to their great astonishment. It proved useful, however, to themselves alone, as the besieged were, in the mean time, in want of provisions, and were forced to capitulate before the truce expired, on the 8th of November, before the whole Florentine army, without which, the enemy would have been under the necessity of retreating. This transaction cannot be comprehended, without confounding therewith, either great incapacity or bad faith, the suspicion of which falls upon the duke. It is true there were many different opinions in the Florentine army, which prevented the general, probably, from availing himself of circumstances. In the mean time winter, and the period for the troops entering cantonments, coming on, he returned to Ferrara\*.

Donat Acciajoli had been already sent ambassador to France, to demand succour from the king of that country. He was a man well versed both in Latin and Greek literature, and alike valuable to his country in political affairs; but, dying on the journey, he was honoured with public funeral obsequies, a dowry was fixed for his daughters by the republic, and privileges were granted to his family. Guid Antonio Vespucci was substituted in his place in the embassy. A consequence of this embassy, was the arrival in Florence of the ambassadors from that king, who gave the republic to understand

\* Macch. lib. 8. Amm. lib. 24. Michael Brut. lib. 7. Diari San.

that they were going to Rome, in order to induce the pope to make peace, and protest to him that otherwise their sovereign would be obliged to take the part of the Florentines. No advantage, therefore, was derived, although the ambassadors of the emperor, too, demanded the same from the pope, who made requests, which, being carried to Florence, were not granted. If these conditions were, as Ammirato relates, that the Floren-

1479. tines were to ask pardon of the pope, cause mass to be said for the souls of those who had lost their lives in the conspiracy, that the dishonourable picture of the archbishop should be cancelled, and the pope indemnified for the expenses, either in money, or by ceding to him S. Sepolcro with other trivial places\*, it appears that the Florentines would have done well to agree to them; since a dangerous war would thereby have been put an end to, which threatened the ruin of the republic, and the extermination of the house of Medicis. It would have been necessary, indeed, to have sacrificed a sum of money, but the double and treble of that amount was spent by the continuation of the war. We must suppose either that these offers were not such as have been stated, or that they were not supposed to be sincere, as the King of Naples was not particularly mentioned in them.

The spring approached, and the Florentines made vigorous preparations for war. Besides the Duke of Ferrara, the Duke of Mantua was also in their pay, and were both already arrived with strong reinforcements. The Venetians, moreover, having made peace with the

\* Amm. Ist. l. 14. Amongst the conditions there was one kept in silence by Ammirato, which broke every treaty, namely, either of consigning to the pope, or expelling, Lorenzo de Medicis, as Jacopo the antiquarian attests with Rainaldo Annal. Eccles. an. 1479.

Turks, gave up Charles of Montone to the Florentines, together with Deifobo Anguillora, with their bands. The latter were sent upon the Pisan territory, where the Milanese outlaws, under Sanseverino, were doing considerable injury to the Florentines, and had the boldness to approach even the gates of Pisa, set fire to the outer gate, and lay waste the country. Upon the news of the arrival of Florentine troops, seeing themselves incapable of contending with them, they retreated from the Serchio, on which they were encamped, by the Lunigiana, into the district of Genoa. The Florentine troops happening, in the necessary operations of war, to trespass upon the Lucca territory, roused anew the ancient jealousy. That city rebelled, and Piero Capponi, ambassador of the Florentine republic, saved himself with difficulty.

These enemies being got rid of, the Florentines turned all their forces against the Siennese territory, and Charles of Montone and Deifobo joined the army of the Duke of Ferrara, between San Gemignano and Colle. In the mean time the bands of Sforza and Braccio came in contact, amongst which ancient rivalships were not yet extinct. The generals, perceiving the danger of keeping them together, thought fit to send Charles, enemy of the pope, with his men against Perugia, and whose name was dear to that city. At the same time, in order to harass the pontiff in various places, and distract his forces, they excited Nicholas Vitelli to endeavour to get possession of the city of Castello, and drive Lorenzo from it, who was a partisan of the pontiff; which, although he succeeded not in effecting, he laid waste the country, and placed that city in great difficulties. Charles, however, suddenly died whilst he was marching with the finest expectations upon Perugia. This



event gave courage to the enemy, who deliberated upon attacking the Florentines, but the latter, led on by Robert Malatesta, and aided by the counsel of James Guicciardini, came out resolutely to meet them, when a very smart action took place upon the lake Thrasimene; and almost in the same spot where Hannibal defeated the ancient Romans, Robert routed the modern papists, led on by Mark of Capua; with different views, indeed, and attended with different consequences\*.

This victory gave exceeding joy to the Florentines, and promised the acquisition of Perugia as almost certain, when the scene was greatly changed. The other part of the Florentine army, under the command of the Dukes of Ferrara and Mantua, was posted at Poggibonsi, to prevent the advances of the enemy. The eagerness evinced by the troops, in the division of the booty of which they had despoiled the country, gave rise to discords, and they were nearly coming to blows. The partiality shewn by the commanders added foment to this bad disposition; and, after considerable tumult, the dissensions which arose, the jealousies, and other causes, obliged the Duke of Ferrara to draw off with his troops, leaving the army weakened and disunited.

This situation was not unknown to the Duke of Calabria, who endeavoured to take advantage of it; and, marching his army rapidly from Sienna, he approached to attack the Florentines. Their camp was pitched in an advantageous position, well defended with artillery, and superior in number to the enemy. With these advantages, however, so much is anarchy able to effect, they were scarcely able to look the enemy in the face;

\* *Diar. Parm. Macchiav. Ist. lib. 8. Mich. Bruti Hist. lib. 7. Amm. Ist. lib. 24.*

and, scattering a panic terror, without knowing the cause of it, they took precipitately to flight. Rarely has similar cowardice been heard of: baggage, artillery, tents, provisions, all was left to the prey of the enemy, who thus conquered without striking a blow. The country people and the rich proprietors of the valley of Elsa, (*Val d'Elsa*), panic-struck at the shameful flight of the principal part of the army, took shelter in crowds, with their property, in Florence, filling the city and the neighbourhood with terror. It became necessary to recall Malatesta in haste, who was closely pressing the city of Perugia, which had already solicited an accommodation with the Florentines. That captain was ordered to halt with his troops, at San Casciano, thus to cover the plain of Florence from inroads. Had the Duke of Calabria, however, after the victory, marched rapidly to Florence, he would have reduced that city to a deplorable condition; but the booty left by the Florentines proved, probably, their salvation; for the enemy, loitering too long in the division of the spoils, gave leisure to Malatesta to arrive and fortify himself in San Casciano. Perugia being liberated, the papal troops, having no obstacle, made an inroad upon the Cortona and Aretine territory; whilst, on the other side, the Duke of Calabria, having taken Poggibonsi, Vico, and Certaldo, pitched his camp around Colle, a well-fortified place, and of considerable importance. The republic ordered the army of San Casciano to advance, to effect the liberation of that place: a body of 5,000 men repaired to San Gimignano, but this enterprise was attended by no act of valour, and an army, not inferior to the Neapolitan, became spectator of the surrender of Colle. The weak troops of those times went into winter quarters at the beginning of November: nor can it be well compre-

hended, why Alphonso profited not of the consternation into which the Florentines were thrown, as well as of the courage with which victory had inspired his troops, to follow up the conquests. The delay proved very advantageous to the conquered; but the generals were frequently obliged to second the will of the troops, who, desirous of repose and of ease, chose rather to enjoy the fruits of their booty\*.

In the mean time a revolution, which took place in the government of Milan, proved further prejudicial to the interests of the Florentines. The restless uncle of the duke, Louis the Moor, who had long entertained views upon that state, after the changes which had taken place in Genoa, and the attack made upon Tuscany by Sanseverino, aimed at striking a greater blow. Sanseverino penetrated with a chosen band to Tortona, and the treacherous governor consigned it to him without offering any resistance. Louis, in the mean time, having a good intelligence with the governor of the castle of Milan, went there with a small body of troops, and suddenly occupied it. He afterwards came to treat with the nephew and the mother. He apparently entered into a reconciliation with them, but in short, he either persuaded or obliged the nephew to take away from her every share in the government; and, having caused her faithful servant, Cicco Simmoentta, to be beheaded, assumed the reins of government. Louis was devoted to the King of Naples, whence the Florentines had nothing more to hope from that side, and one of the first transactions was peace with that king†. The Floren-

\* *Diar. Parm. Macchiav. Ist. lib. 8. Mich. Bruti Hist. lib. 7. Amm. Ist. lib. 24.*

† *Corio Istor. Milan. Diar. Parm.*

tines, therefore, were left almost alone in a dangerous war against two powerful enemies, being able to reckon little upon the Venetians, for the reasons already adduced.

In the mean time a messenger of the Duke of Calabria arrived at Florence, who offered a truce, for a considerable period, to the Florentines, in name of the king and the pope. Either that the Florentines were desirous of affording some satisfaction to the King of France, by this amicable appearance, at a season in which hostilities must necessarily be suspended, or whatever other motive determined them to it, the offer was willingly accepted by them. In wars, winter is the season for cool and steady reflection, which the impetuosity of martial operations cannot allow of: after two campaigns the Florentines began to feel the burthen of the war, and did not conceal it. The dangers they were exposed to, the anxiety of mind they laboured under continually, the burthens already imposed, in order to carry on the war, and the additional with which they were threatened, the little advances made, nay, the losses they sustained, the embarrassed state of their commerce, and the little prospect of triumphing over two powerful enemies, with allies who were tardy in their succours, and evinced but little good-will, gave them considerable trouble. It was also said, that all this was supported by the republic for the ambition of one family alone.

These reflections, which first emanated from a few confidential friends, began to circulate more widely through the city. Coming to the ears of Lorenzo\*, they urged him to one of those actions, which, from

\* Some say that Jerome Morelli, although a friend of the house of Medicis, said it openly to Lorenzo.—Nardi Ist. Fior. lib. 1.

the good or bad success which attends them, gives them the name of either rash or great. This was to repair personally to Naples, to endeavour to persuade the king to make peace with him, and abandon Sixtus. The greater part of his friends disadvised him from this proceeding, and with great appearance of reason. Ferdinand was known to be a man without faith, and had given many examples that the most atrocious crime cost him nothing. The sacred character of ambassador, with which the republic had invested him, could at most protect him against open violence, but not against secret snares; and who would have ensured him, after what had occurred to the Prince of Rossano and James Piccinino, and so many others, who were betrayed under protestations of good faith? One blow alone would have changed the state of Florence, which was what the views of the king and pope tended to, and if it had been attempted in his native country, in the midst of his own subjects, in a church, how could he flatter himself that the same would not happen again, in a strange land, under the auspices of a king of the character of Ferdinand? It may be easily imagined, that these very obvious reflections could not escape Lorenzo; but, confident in himself, and of his powers of persuasion, he chose, nevertheless, to hazard the dangerous enterprise. We must not condemn such a man either of vanity or of imprudence; probably he already knew that he would be well received there, and had gained the principal ministers of Ferdinand by secret means. The Duke Hercules of Ferrara, son-in-law of the king, advised him to this meeting, and Lodovico the Moor, himself, who was seen vacillating, wished for peace, and secretly counselled the king to terminate the war. These threads were probably known to Lorenzo. Having recom-

mended the cares and duties of the republic to Thomas Soderini, the gonfaloniere, he left Florence on the 1st of December. He stopped at San Miniato, whence he addressed a letter to the signiory, wherein he makes known to them the resolution he had taken, of going to Naples\*. This letter abounds in interested feeling and tenderness of affection for his native country, for which he declares himself ever ready to sacrifice himself, neither dissimulating the danger he runs, nor wanting in respect for the signiory, whom he addresses as their subject. On the 5th of December credential letters were sent to him at Pisa, in which he was declared ambassador to the king, with the most honourable titles, and the most ample powers†; and, embarking upon a galley in the heart of winter, he directed his voyage towards Naples.

Whilst Lorenzo was on the voyage, the Florentine republic met with a fresh loss in Sarzana, a well-fortified city, and the frontier town of her states. This city was treacherously given up to the Genoese, who, having regained their liberty, were now under the government of the Doge Augustin Fregoso. Genoa was at peace with the Florentines; whence, besides the loss of so important a city, hostilities appeared about to be renewed, and that a new enemy had risen up against them. They were not without suspicion also, that, although they were at truce, the Duke of Calabria had been the instigator of this act. The city was, therefore, in considerable uneasiness. She was deprived of the

\* Letters of the Princes, tom. 2, Edition of Zilietti. This letter denies the discourse which Ammirato supposes made by Lorenzo to the citizens, in the palace, before departure, which he mentions at large.

† Mich. Bruti Hist. lib. 7. Ammir. lib. 24.

head of the republic, to whom she was accustomed to direct herself in difficult occurrences, and who was now at the discretion of a dangerous enemy.

The fame of Lorenzo was so great, that, upon his arrival at Naples, he was looked upon with admiration and curiosity, not only by the king, but the whole city; but, what rarely happens, his presence even surpassed his fame. The magnificence he displayed at that court, the genius, the urbanity, the amiable manners which distinguished him, the splendour of his banquets, the princely sums he constantly distributed to the poor, the orphans he endowed, gained the hearts of all ranks of persons; and, rival as he was to any sovereign in munificence, he far surpassed them all in intellect and in nobility.

Although all the threads of the negotiation of Lorenzo, with the king and his ministers, are not known to us, it is not difficult to perceive, that gold and eloquence are two of the most powerful means of attaining the desired end. Lorenzo possessed them both, and knew how to employ them at a proper season. With the former he was, probably, enabled to gain those who had the greatest influence over the councils of the king; by the latter, the king himself, to whom he addressed himself, upon the public affairs, with so much intelligence and evidence, and upon the interests of the king too, that conviction followed from astonishment. Nor were the best of reasons wanting, in order to persuade him. The Florentines had no interests contrary to those of the king, and the latter nothing to fear from them, but much from the Venetians; who, being masters of the Adriatic, frequently infested the ports of Apulia and Calabria; who had evinced so much jealousy at the king, on account of the kingdom of Cyprus; who kept a vigilant

and eager eye upon the states of Milan; who rejoiced at their discords, panted for the empire of Italy, and, being faithless allies of the Florentines, contemplated, with satisfaction, the principal powers exhausting and destroying themselves, in order that they, (the Venetians,) might take advantage thereof at a proper season.

Lorenzo then explained to him, that the pope was the natural enemy of the King of Naples, since, arrogating to himself the sovereign authority over his states, he created and deposed rulers at his option; that past kings, and his father himself, had seen dangerous examples of pontifical ambition, and that he himself, had it not been for the death of Calistus, would probably have been excluded from the throne; that Sixtus might entertain the same views against him, in order to exalt the Count Jerome, for whom he was ready to attempt any thing; that, finally, his natural allies were the Florentines.

The king entered into all the views of Lorenzo. Peace was not only made, but a kind of alliance entered into, by which the king and the Florentine republic bound themselves to the mutual defence of their states. It was exacted from the republic, that those persons of the family of the Pazzi should be set at liberty, who had been shut up in the tower of Volterra; that she should pay a sum of money to the Duke of Calabria; that, at the will of the king, a restitution should be made of the places that had been taken, leaving room for the Duke of Milan and the pope to enter the alliance; but the latter was very angry at it, as were the Venetians, who thought they were neglected\*.

\* During the whole time Lorenzo was at Naples, there is not the smallest trace of any snares being laid for him; nay, the security he found in the faith of Ferdinand, appears from a letter of his, written to the council of ten: "By different ways I have understood, that



Lorenzo returned to Florence after about three months' absence, covered with glory, and was invested with far greater authority than he possessed before he quitted it. The Venetians and the pope made an alliance together, but were impeded in their intentions by a sinister event, which threatened the whole of Italy with slavery.

Mahomet, after the capture of Constantinople, had greatly extended his conquests, and a considerable part of ancient Greece had fallen into his hands. Having made a vain attempt upon the island of Rhodes, his fleet being driven from thence, approached Italy, and, suddenly attacking Otranto, took possession of that city, after putting to death a great part of the inhabitants, and making slaves of the rest. Nor was this only an inroad, as he established himself there with 6,000 men. The dismay into which Italy was thrown cannot be imagined. The key of the country was in the hands of the Turks, the most warlike nation which, on this side, could bring as many troops into it as they pleased, troops alike formidable for the valour they evinced, the cruelties they

his majesty has more jealousy of my person and of my affairs, than I have myself."—Epis. dated 3rd January, Riformaz. Filza, 2,694. It may be believed, that the pope and Count Jerome, who had so often sought to kill him, omitted no attempt to persuade the king to retain him; but it appears that Ferdinand, in spite of his character, had formed a kind of glory in defending Lorenzo, whence I do not know that we may infer, that he changed opinion after his departure, and that the letter, by which he recalls him with so much haste, was dictated by deceit. Read that letter mentioned at the 111th note of Fabbroni, a letter written after having received new despatches from the pope. Such an extraordinary anxiety is therein discovered for the return of Lorenzo, without the motives being sufficient to give rise to any suspicion. Had the pope and the count, perhaps, made offers to the king to trespass beyond his good faith? That cannot be affirmed. Lorenzo, however declined the danger.

exercised, and the hatred they bore towards the christian name. The pope, the King of Naples, were the first to see themselves lost. Sixtus endeavoured to unite all the princes of Europe in alliance, but not trusting much in their aid, he was preparing to abandon Italy, and had already caused the galleys to be prepared, to convey him for shelter to Avignon, when the news of the death of Mahomet II. liberated Italy at once from the imminent danger; since, a dissension arising between the sons of the latter, the bashaw, who had occupied Otranto, thinking it necessary for his fortune to be present at the scene of action, retreated precipitately to Constantinople.

We have already made mention of this Ottoman monarch, and it may be added that he was the greatest who ever sat upon that throne. He obtained from the Turks, like Alexander from the Greeks, the title of Great, which was afterwards continued, by way of abuse, to his successors, even by the christians, who called that emperor the Great Turk. He conquered two empires, twelve kingdoms, and two hundred  
<sup>1481.</sup> considerable cities. Nothing proves his greatness more than the terror of the christians at his name, and the joy which his death excited every where. Of the former, besides many other facts, we have one permanent testimony, in the bell which began to ring at mid-day, in his reign, in order to warn the faithful to implore the aid of Heaven against his arms. At the news of his death, the greatest festivals took place throughout Christendom. In Rome all the churches were opened, and Sixtus ordered three days of jubilee to be held, solemn processions to be formed, and the guns of Castel San Angelo to be discharged. Whilst all Europe was thus trembling before the conqueror of Constantinople, Lorenzo enjoyed his

good esteem to such a degree, that, hearing of the enormous attempts which had been made against the person of Lorenzo, he ordered Bernard Bandini, who had taken refuge there, to be arrested, and consigned to the agents of the republic, who being brought to Florence, whilst Lorenzo was at Naples, was hanged at the windows of the palace\*. The wisdom displayed by the Florentine government caused its citizens to be alike distinguished by that conqueror, as their commerce was respected, and we have already had one proof of the indulgence shewn the latter, in the capture of Negroponte.

Lorenzo well knew, that however a diversity of maxims and religions may make men think differently, the government ought only to seek the security of its own

\* From various letters that are read at the reformatory, it may be inferred that Mahomet caused Bandini to be arrested of his own accord, even without the interference of the Florentines.—Consul. Floren. in Per. “By the letters of Bernard Peruzzi, we have heard, with great pleasure, that very glorious prince has taken Bernard Bandini, an infamous parricide and traitor to his country, and says that he will do with him whatever we wish. They wonder the ambassador has not written about him: they order him to thank the emperor, and that they send an ambassador on purpose to thank him formally, die 18th of June, 1479. Class X. Distin I.” Then follows a letter of the consul, of the 5th July, who had also participated the news. From the letter of Peruzzi we discover that Mahomet had caused Bandini to be arrested of his own will; since, if it had been hinted by the duties of the ambassador, he would have given the latter an account of it before any other, and there would have been some notice of this in the correspondence. Anthony of the Medicis was chosen ambassador, to thank Mahomet, and to receive Bandini. In another letter in the same place, 17th December, 1479, Medici is ordered to bring Bandini to Florence, and if he found himself so situated, that he might escape from him, to have him put to death.

subjects, and that nothing is more contrary to the principles of a wise policy, than a governor or minister, who manifests a useless enmity, and an impotent rage, towards a powerful enemy, who, with one nod, can oppress him. The wise measures taken by Lorenzo, the donations he so properly made to the ministers and the favourites of that sovereign, rendered the latter not only favourable, but a friend to the Florentine nation, which he protected and favoured with privileges. He sent ambassadors to Florence, who were distinguished and well received. Whilst the numerous herd of weak and bigotted spirits murmured at their reception, the wise loaded them with their approbation; and whilst Venice and Genoa were suffering irreparable injury, in the continual losses they sustained, Florence was favoured and distinguished\*.

The dread of the Turks, besides terminating the war in Tuscany, by recalling the Duke of Calabria from Tuscany to defend his kingdom, liberated her from another suspicion. The Siennese had been allies of the King of Naples, fighting valiantly against the Florentines, with the hope of aggrandizement. The Duke of Calabria had gained the affections of the principal persons of the republic of Sienna, had artfully fomented the factions; and it would have cost him little to have become master of it. He entertained views of the latter nature, which the Siennese soon began to perceive, however little

\* Consult the Chronicle of Benedetto, Dei Decim. of Pagnini, document. It is there said, that in the year 1479, Mahomet II. sent ambassadors to Florence, with presents for Lorenzo and Bernardetto de Medicis, and demanded from the Florentines, masters of engraving on wood, sculpture of bronze, and that the ambassadors were presented to the government by a young man of the bank Martelli: this circumstance may induce us to believe that they were private agents, without any public character.

they could oppose him. The Florentines saw with pain a greater evil hanging over them, that of war; a powerful sovereign, heir to the throne of Naples, laying the foundation of a dangerous dominion almost at their own gates, by which the republic could not fail to be oppressed; but accident, the father of so many unexpected events, by placing Italy in danger, liberated the Florentines and the Siennese from another, and the duke, in the lamentations he made denied not that he had lost all his hopes. After a short time, a commissary of the King of Naples, Messer Prinzevalle, was sent to restore to the Florentines the places that had been occupied. This was warmly opposed by the Siennese, who maintained that, by the convention with the allies all that had been conquered by the common arms within an extent of fifteen miles of Sienna belonged to them. They ought to have known that promises to the weak count for nothing; their reclamations were therefore useless, because they were not sustained by power\*.

The Florentines, in order to effect a reconciliation with the pope, sent him twelve of the principal citizens to implore his forgiveness, at the head of whom was Francis Soderini, Bishop of Volterra. After the sanguinary events of Florence, excited by Sixtus, we cannot, without some feeling of indignation, contemplate the twelve respectable envoys of the Florentine republic in the portico of St. Peter, throwing themselves at the feet of the pope,

\* *Alleg. Alleg. Diar. Sanesi Rer. Ital. tom. 23.*—"To the Duke of Milan, who made urgent demands to the Siennese to restore the places to the Florentines, they answered they would not give them up for any thing in the world: on the 25th March, Messer Prinzevalle sent a brief to the signiory of Sienna, that they should go or send to Poggibonsi to hear the iniquitous sentence they would give him of the places as a man of the king....."

suing for pardon with the greatest signs of humiliation ; whilst the latter, seated upon his pontifical chair, surrounded by cardinals and prelates, reproaches them for their pretended crimes, in words of bitterness ; gives them a new benediction\*, and admits them again into the pale of the church. He however imposed upon them the heavy condition of maintaining fifteen galleys in the war against the Turks. They lamented their situation, but gave not a peremptory negative. It was, however, so unsuitable to their system of politics, and it was so impossible that the Florentine republic, weakened as she was by the last war, could support this expense, that Guido Antonio Vespucci was sent to the pope, and succeeded in persuading him to exonerate the republic from so severe an obligation.

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\* Whoever wishes to read this ceremony more in detail, may consult Jacopi Volatior *Diar. Romanum*, Rer. Ital. Scrip. tom. 23.

## CHAPTER VIII.

CONSPIRACY OF FRESCOBALDI.—SPLENDID RECEPTION OF RIARIO AT VENICE.—WAR WITH THE DUKE OF FERRARA.—VICTORY OF THE VENETIANS.—THE HOLY ALLIANCE, AND THE POPE'S EXCOMMUNICATION AGAINST THEM.—WAR BETWEEN THE DUKE OF MILAN AND THE KING OF NAPLES.—DEATH OF SIXTUS IV., HIS QUALITIES.—ELECTION OF INNOCENT VIII.—WAR BETWEEN THE KING OF NAPLES AND THE POPE.—LORENZO DE MEDICIS RESOLVES UPON ASSISTING THE FORMER.—LEWIS SFORZA JOINS HIM.—LORENZO'S NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE WHICH IS CONCLUDED.—RECOVERS SARZANO, WHICH SURRENDERS AT DISCRETION.—UNIVERSAL PEACE IN ITALY.—THE KING OF NAPLES PUTS THE REBEL BARONS TO DEATH. MURDER OF COUNT JEROME RIARIO.—ASSASSINATION OF GALEOTTO MANFREDI.—ISABELLA OF NAPLES, WIFE OF THE DUKE OF MILAN, ARRIVES AT LEGHORN.—GREAT QUALITIES OF LORENZO.—HIS LINGERING DISEASE, LAST MOMENTS, AND DEATH.—DEATH OF INNOCENT VIII.—ELECTION OF ALEXANDER VI.—DISCONTENT BETWEEN THE COURTS OF NAPLES AND MILAN.—WANT OF FORESIGHT IN PETER DE MEDICIS.—PRETENSIONS OF CHARLES VIII. OF FRANCE TO THE CROWN OF NAPLES.—NEGOTIATIONS OF LEWIS.—DEATH OF THE KING FERDINAND OF NAPLES.—ALPHONSO SUCCEEDS HIM, AND PREPARES FOR WAR.

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THE good fortune of Lorenzo which had already extricated him from so many dangers, now saved him from another planned against him in his native country. Baptist Frescobaldi was consul in Constantinople when the Turks consigned Bernard Bandini to the Florentine agents, and he was concerned in the negotiation for that purpose. It appears, indeed, strange that upon his

return to Florence he could conceive the idea of attempting the life of Lorenzo with impunity; but in conjunction with one Baldovinetti, natural son of Peter, with Philip and Francis Balducci, he entered into a conspiracy to assassinate Lorenzo in the church of the Carmine\*; the execution of the plan, however, being too long deferred, was discovered, and they were punished with death†.

After a short interval of peace, arms were again taken up in Italy. The pope and the Venetians were allied together, and both contemplated a war with Hercules, Duke of Ferrara, the Venetians looking upon the bordering states of the latter with an eager eye, and the pope particularly wishing to get possession of them for the Count Jerome. The two powers looked to the spoil of the states of the third, in order, probably, afterwards to quarrel between themselves about the division of the booty, not unlike two gamblers by profession, intent upon the plunder of a third. The Venetians, however, who were more cunning, knew that the advantages of this war would be theirs, and had nothing to fear from the power of Count Riario, which must

\* Valori Vita Laur.

† Ammirato mentions only the first three; Albino Tomacello adds Francis Balducci, and changes Frescobaldi into Baptist Bardi by error of name, as he was called Baptist of Barbo Frescobaldi. In a code of the Library Rinuccini it is said that the delay arose from some armour not being finished, in which the conspirators were to dress themselves. In the Roman *Diario* the two Balducci are mentioned, adding that one of them was only guilty of being silent upon the conspiracy, and that he had dissuaded his brother. Jacob. Volater. *Rer. Ital.* tom. 23. In the *Diario* of Parma, three of the persons executed are mentioned. If we except Ammirato, who is silent upon the cause that urged them to this attempt, all the others accuse Count Jerome as being an instigator; but this is only a suspicion without any authentic proof.



either be extinguished, or reduced to little importance, at the no very distant death of the old and diseased pontiff; but they could derive great aid from him at present, and in order, therefore, to interest Count Jerome the more in their favour, they received him and his wife in Venice with honours usual only to be lavished upon sovereigns, knowing what impression such reception makes upon frivolous minds suddenly elevated to fortune from nothing. In all the places through which they passed they were complimented in the name of the republic, and were met at Malamocco by forty of the principal signiors, afterwards by the Doge himself in his splendid Bucentaur, and by a hundred and fifteen noble ladies. A superb banquet was prepared for him on the 9th September, in the ducal palace. Besides the Doge who was decorated with all his pompous garments of ceremony, surrounded by the first Venetian nobility, a hundred and thirty-two of the first virgin ladies were present covered with jewels and pearls, together with all the people the place was capable of containing. Upon the arrival of Count Jerome with his wife, the Doge and principal magistrates rose up; the latter conducting the two consorts to the first places, one on the right, the other on the left of the Doge. A ball commenced which lasted throughout the night, and afterwards a lottery was drawn consisting of precious female ornaments of the greatest value, and the festival finished with a most costly supper. These splendid trifles are not unworthy of the observation of the historian, inasmuch as they demonstrate a reciprocal interchange of meanness and of pride. They were like so many caresses paid to a greyhound who was panting to dart upon his prey\*.

\* Jacop. Volater. Diar. Rom. The author was present at this

After many useless negotiations, war was declared against the Duke of Ferrara. It was the interest both of the Florentines and the Duke of Milan not to suffer that prince to be oppressed. They therefore lent him aid, and gained the King of Naples over to them, who sent the Duke of Calabria upon the territory of the pope, in order to cause a diversion. The pope seeing himself straightened by the royal arms, having lost various cities, amongst others, Terracina, demanded from the Venetians the general Robert Malatesta, who arrived with a body of Venetian troops. Rome

<sup>1482.</sup> was in the greatest consternation at seeing the enemy so near to her, but was soon liberated from all apprehension, for Malatesta, having attacked the Duke of Calabria on the 21st of August, defeated him in an affair which lasted five hours; dispersed his army; took many of the first Neapolitan nobles prisoners, and the duke himself escaped with great difficulty\*. Almost all the places which had been lost returned to their allegiance towards the pope; but the brave Malatesta enjoyed but little the fruit of so signal a victory. Having grown warm in the action, he drank an excessive quantity of cold water, and being attacked by a dysentery, died in his fortieth year, at Rome. At the same time, the valiant Frederick D'Urbino died also in Rome; by which event the two greatest generals, antagonists, and who enjoyed the highest celebrity, were taken away at the same moment. Malatesta had

festival. Read also a letter of Mathew, Archdeacon of Forli, to Lorenzo the Magnificent, taken from the Medicean Archive.—Fabro, Vita Laur. Note 120.

\* It is related, that being abandoned by all, he was saved by a body of those Turks who had passed into his service in the surrender of Otranto.

married the daughter of Frederick: this unfortunate woman, therefore, received the tidings of the death of both her father and her husband \* on the same day and the same hour.

The little concern, and perhaps even joy, evinced by the Roman court and by Count Jerome at the death of this illustrious chieftain, partly probably from envy, and partly from the desire of getting possession of Rimini, gave credit to the report that he had been poisoned, a crime, indeed, not rare in those times, but of which the accusation was even still more usual †. The Florentines acted in this war as very faint allies; they, however, sent succour to Rimini, where the wife and young son of Malatesta were, although a hostile captain, and prevented it being occupied by the troops of the pope, made little expeditions towards the city of Castello ‡, and defended Nicholas Vitelli from the pontifical arms.

The Venetians, in the mean while, were acting with all vigour against the Duke of Milan, who, receiving but little support from the allies, was in great danger of falling. The wisest counsellors of the Roman court finally made the pope and his nephew understand how impolitic this war was, which was only undertaken to favour the aggrandizement of the Venetians, a power already too formidable, which alone would finally reap all the fruit of the ruin of the duke. They were con-

\* Jacop. Volat. Dior. Rom.

† The pope went to see him when sick, and caused a magnificent funeral to be prepared like a cardinal's erecting a noble mausoleum to him in St. Peter's with this eulogy. "Virtus socia vitæ, gloria mortis." Nevertheless, the same Volterrano, a man attached to the pontifical court, does not deny the joy evinced by the latter court at his death.

‡ Ammir. Ist. lib. 25.

vinced by these arguments ; and Rome wholly separated herself from the Venetians\*. The latter, however, ceased not their hostilities against the Ferrarese. An alliance was then made of the greater part of the powers of Italy against the Venetians, which was called the *Holiest Alliance*, from the accession thereto of the pope, and which, viewing the resources it was master of, appeared fitted to humble the Venetian power with all rapidity, if experience had not always shewn us the little energy and activity displayed by alliances, which, like the fabulous serpent with many heads, are never animated by one single wish, but confounded by a diversity of interests.

The pope, the King of Naples, the Florentines, the Duke of Milan, were now in confederacy together. The Duke of Calabria, who had conducted his troops upon the Ferrarese territory, attacked the Venetian army near Argenta, and derived a considerable advantage. <sup>1483.</sup> Louis Marcello, Venetian purveyor, was taken prisoner. At Massa of Foscaglia, too, another affair took place, which proved favourable to the allies : the pope, who, a short time since, had made war upon Ferrara, in conjunction with the Venetians, now united against them, availed himself of his spiritual arms, and placed those people under interdict without any circumstance having altered †.

This manner of proceeding could not do otherwise than draw down scandal upon the faithful. The Cardinal Barbo, a Venetian, Patriarch of Aquileia, had the courage to reply to the pope in modest terms, maintaining the rights of his country—laying before him that

\* Diar. Ferrar. Rer. Ital. tom. 24. Navag. His. Ven.

† Corio's Milanese History.

both the conditions which were not observed towards the Venetians by the duke, and the subsidy not paid by him as feudatory to the holy see, had united them together a short time since against a common enemy, and that circumstances were not altered. The defence was useless; the pope fulminated his scandalous excommunication, and sending his bull throughout the whole christian world, by which men were invited to rob the Venetians, he ordered their debtors not to pay them under pain of the same censure, and forbade the sacrament to their subjects, which was not granted them even at the point of death. Such was the abuse made of these spiritual arms—an abuse which has finished by destroying their power. The Venetians obliged the ecclesiastics to keep the churches open, and appealed to the future council with the suffrage of the celebrated John Baptist Rosselli, professor in Padua, and other counsellors, and caused the answers to be stuck up in Rome\*.

The Duke of Milan, or rather Lewis the Moor, made a diversion by commencing hostilities in Lombardy: Finally, the Duke of Calabria, having joined the forces of the alliance with a powerful army, arrived upon the territory of the Venetians, who, being inferior in numbers, held themselves upon the defensive, and continued progressively to lose ground. The allies, instead of profiting of this advantage, and following up the war with vigour, went very early into winter quarters (as usual), whereby their advantages vanished, as they themselves lost, and gave an opportunity to the Venetians, which is always precious both to conquerors and the conquered.

\* Rosselli sustains that the appeal being made, the churches were kept open, and the sacrament administered, by that legal axiom: "*Stante appellatione nil debeat esse innovatum.*"—Sanuto *Vite de' Dogi di Ven.*

The Florentines had only commenced some trifling operations. It was their intention to recover Sarzana, which had been lost since the last war, and fallen into the hands of the Fregosi, who, after some feint of ceding it to them, suddenly disposed of it to the bank of St. George.

This bank has been celebrated for a long time, but has fallen into the deepest languor in the late calamities of war. The republic of Genoa, when she wanted money, took loans from the citizens, and assigned to them the revenues of the custom-house to pay the interest: wanting afterwards new loans, she gave security to the creditors in the same manner, and assigned them other branches of the public revenues. The latter were administered without the interference of government by the principal creditors, who created a magistracy, in whose deliberations each had a share proportioned to his credit—and a vote, regulated by the bills or property he possessed therein. This society continuing to increase, embraced new and fresh branches of the public revenues, and acquiring cities and castles, nominated

<sup>1484.</sup> governors to them, and the methods of administration, to such an extent, that it was predicted by one of the most profound politicians\*, that one day the Bank of St. George would get possession of the whole Ligurian republic, and would thus constitute a new system of government, the most perfect (according to him) that can be imagined. But the first part has not been verified, and the second is very problematical. This society of merchants, intent only upon pecuniary interests, has never either possessed the courage or the ambition to rule; and as the possession of cities would have engaged them in expensive wars, they have subse-

\* Macchiav. Istor. Fior. lib. 2.

quently voluntarily abandoned their possession; and Corsica, which they held, was freely ceded to the Genoese republic. At this time the society entertained more vast projects : she possessed Pietra Santa, by which she obtained Sarzana for money, and sent governors there, who even threatened the neighbouring state of Florence. They armed a fleet, which did considerable mischief to the shores of Tuscany, Vada, and Leghorn,—and prevented the progress of the Florentines, who intended to make themselves masters of Pietra Santa, in order to facilitate the siege of Sarzana. They were at first driven back with shame; but returning with renewed courage, and taking a strong fort by assault situated at the ascent to the Cervia, and the following day another in the valley of Corvara, and, having garrisoned them, they encamped at Pietra Santa. The soldiery, animated by the hopes and donations held out to them by Lorenzo de Medicis, who had repaired thither in person, assailed the principal fortress with such vigour, that, having conquered it, the inhabitants demanded and obtained a capitulation, an event which gave exceeding joy to the republic\*.

The disagreements which arose between Alphonso, Duke of Calabria, and Lewis, governor of the state of Milan, cooled the ardour of the allies. Lewis Sforza, called the Moor, who became afterwards so notorious on account of the many misfortunes drawn upon Italy, upon his family, and himself, had usurped the sovereign power over the states of his nephew. In order to exclude his mother, the Duchess Bona Reggente, from the government, he had caused the duke to assume

\* Ammir. Istor. lib. 25. Macch. Istor. lib. 8. Mach. Bru. Hist. lib. 8.

it prematurely in his twelfth year, (as if wisdom had preceded his age,) making him declare to his mother, from his own mouth, that she should no longer interfere in affairs. But scarce was the latter gone, when Lewis himself assumed the absolute command, and continued to hold it, even in those years when his pupil's reason had become matured, declaring him now as incapable to govern, as he had hastily judged him capable of doing so. Amongst those who ill tolerated his usurpation was the Duke of Calabria, whose daughter was to marry the Duke of Milan. Alphonso causing his plans to be known too openly, Lewis alienated himself from him; the Venetians blew fuel upon the fire, and soon induced Lewis to accord with them; and, being free on this side, they sent a fleet against the shores of Naples, took Gallipoli, Brindisi, and threatened the whole coast. The old King Ferdinand, who knew he was so little beloved by the barons of the kingdom, disturbed by this unexpected attack, hastened to make peace with the Venetians, and drew along with him the Florentines, the other smaller Italian princes, and even the pope, who was obliged to adhere to it\*. The Duke of Ferrara was sacrificed in this peace, and obliged to cede to the Venetians the rich place of Polesine.

Scarcely, however, had Sixtus IV. received news of it when he died: he was very old, and tormented by the gout, which were sufficient causes; it was, however, commonly reported, that the news of the peace accelerated his last moments†. Neither religion nor the state

\* Dior. Rom. Volat. Sanuto Lives of the Doges of Venice.

† Jacob. Volater. Diar. Roman. The author relates that it very much displeased him, since he thought he could obtain better conditions. These verses were also distributed.

*Sistere qui potuit nullo cum fœdere Sistus,  
Audito tantum nomine pacis, obit.*



derived much credit from him. He frequently made great abuses of the former for political purposes, and his government was one of the most violent. He thought only of aggrandizing his own house \*. His entire image in bas-relief, surrounded with medallions, on which his enterprises are written, is to be seen in the bronze sepulchre a little raised from the ground, in the chapel of the Sacrament in Saint Peters. The contour does no great honour to Cammeo; nor can we decide whether the conspiracy of the Pazzi is engraved amongst his enterprises, as an eulogy or a satire.

John Baptist Cibo was elected under the name of Innocent VIII., who having been married before, had children; he was believed to be of a pacific disposition; sometimes, however, a change of condition changes, at least, in part, the character. The new pope was easily persuaded to wage war with the King of Naples. Various causes induced him. The hope of aggrandizing his family (the usual weakness of the popes) made him look with a greedy eye upon the states of a king dependant upon the pontifical see, and the discontents of that kingdom increased his expectations. The rebellion of Aquila contributed the more to make him embrace this resolution. This well-fortified city, grown rich by commerce, became the key of the two states to whatever power possessed it. Although she was under some small dependance upon the King of Naples, she was almost

\* The Cardinal Peter Riario, his nephew or son, died at the age of twenty-eight, ruined by excesses which were not very decent, particularly in an ecclesiastic. His prodigality and dissipation were scandalous, and were carried so far as to give his mistress shoes covered entirely with pearls. He was only two years cardinal, in which he spent 200,000 dollars, and left 60,000 of debt.—See Volterr.

free: the king, indeed, sent some ministers to execute justice, according to the laws of the place, but the public affairs were regulated by the city herself, in which, at that time, the Count of Montorio enjoyed the highest credit. The King of Naples wished to make himself absolute master of it; and his son Alphonso coming to the throne, called the Count Montorio to him, under pretext of pacifying seditions, to treat with him, as he said, of the same object; but upon his arrival, he arrested him, and sent him to Naples. The Aquilans, irritated

at this news, rebelled, put the ministers of the  
 1485. king to death, and hoisted the standard of the pope, to whom they sent an offer of the dominion over their city, exposing to him the wrongs they had received from the king. The pope, as sovereign lord of those states, had a certain right to cause justice to be administered to them; he, therefore, readily received them\*, took Sanseverino with his bands into pay, and prepared for war, which, from the discontents of the kingdom, he was induced to believe would be a successful one.

The cruel character, evinced by Ferdinand, and his son, the Duke of Calabria, had irritated the greater part of their feudal lords. The greediness of gold advising new and fresh impositions, a general ill humour had spread itself throughout the kingdom. Many barons rebelled and demanded protection from the pope, who neglected not the propitious† opportunity. In these deplorable circumstances the Sovereign of Naples could only have recourse to the Florentines, and the Duke of Milan. He was in the greatest danger; since a monarch can be in no greater, against whom his subjects bore the greatest

\* Michael. Bruti. Hist. lib. 8.

† Stor. del Regno di Nap. Rer. Ital. script. tom. 23.

hatred, and were already in rebellion ; to which was added the external war waged against him by an enemy like the pontiff, who called himself master of that kingdom, and who could avail himself of spiritual arms.

The Florentine republic, which had but recently escaped from the expenses, and the dangers attendant upon a war, refused to enter a new one. Lorenzo made use of all his eloquence to determine them to it, and in an oration, in which the force of reasoning was adorned with the finest flowers of eloquence, he succeeded in persuading the most obstinate to lend succours to Ferdinand\*. Not only faith and gratitude, but state motives, and the safety of Italy demanded it. If the family of Arragon had been dethroned, what would have become of his government? If it remained quietly in the power of the pope, the equilibrium of Italy was lost. If the contention continued longer, a civil war would have distracted her ; foreign pretenders would have invaded Italy ; her princes would have been divided into factions, the other branch of the family of Arragon, powerful in Spain, and who possessed Sicily, would have taken a share in it ; and those evils would have been anticipated, which took place nine years afterwards, and which the prudent Lorenzo had probably foreseen. Succours were sent to the King of Naples, and Lewis Sforza also joined the league.

The Venetians, who professed other politics, who, aspiring to the empire of all Italy, looked, with pleasure, upon the humiliation or the fall of every prince, or who, at least, thought they would profit by any disconcert, gave succours to the pope, and conceded to Sanseverino their captain-general, the liberty of serving him. The

\* Valori Vita Laur. Mich. Bru. lib. 8.

king had made two camps ; one under his order to fight the rebels, the other under the Duke of Calabria, who advanced towards Rome. Sanseverino arrived exactly at the time when Rome was greatly harassed by the enemy's arms ; various movements and actions took place, in one of which, however, Alphonso appears<sup>1486.</sup> to have been entirely beaten, since he was obliged to abandon the pontifical states, and take shelter at Montepulciano\*, whence he made his circumstances known to Lorenzo. He received considerable succours both in arms and money, and was placed in a condition again to confront the enemy. Lorenzo afterwards hastily despatched the tidings of Alphonso to Naples, whom the rebels having considered dead, had taken greater courage†. Lorenzo fought in this war more by the aid of his own counsel, than the generals with their arms. He brought the Orsini over from the friendship of the pope ; made Sanseverino mistrustful of him ; and finally opened the road to peace, since after an undecided and insignificant action, which took place between the duke, who had been reinforced, and Sanseverino, towards Castell Oltieri, where he had advanced‡, the principal powers perceived it very difficult to gain at that game. It became easy, therefore, for Lorenzo to sound the words of peace in the ears of the pope, who, not inured to war, threatened with rebellion in Rome, and annoyed by

\* Mich. Br. His. lib. 8.

† Mich. Br. loc. cit. This writer appears the most accurate upon these events. He relates, that in order to make the account get safely to King Ferdinand, the sheet was made of a short blade of tin, hidden in the crum of bread, which being afterwards baked and consigned to a cunning and faithful man, although inspected by the enemy, arrived safe.

‡ Mich. Br. Hist. lib. 8. Ammir. Ist. lib. 25.

an unpleasant situation, readily suffered himself to be persuaded. Peace, therefore, was concluded on the 11th of August; matters were placed on their original footing; and a general pardon was promised to the rebel barons, a condition which was afterwards so ill observed.

Lorenzo de Medicis was desirous, for his own greater consideration, and that of the republic, to unite the friendship of the pope with that which he enjoyed with the King of Naples. The matrimony proposed to him of his daughter Magdalene, with the young Francis Cibo, son of the pope, was joyfully received by the latter, who thus saw the hopes of aggrandizement of his house in an alliance of consanguinity with so powerful a family.

Of the remains of the war, the Florentines retained only the desire of regaining Sarzana; and being free from every other embarrassment, they were enabled to surround it on every side at their option, whilst the presence of Lorenzo gave animation to the activity displayed by the besiegers. Matters being brought so far as to prepare for an assault, the besieged chose not to wait for it, but surrendered at discretion, an event which filled the city of Florence with joy, which had so long laboured to regain it. Lorenzo, above all, was highly pleased at it, for he had the misfortune to see Sarzana taken away from him, when he governed the state, and the loss lay always sore at his heart\*.

The reputation and name of Lorenzo were successful in quelling a dangerous rebellion, which had broken out beyond the Florentine states. Osimo, a city of the pope, had rebelled at the instigation of Boccolino, a popular

\* Mich. Br. Hist. lib. Ammir. Ist. lib. 25.

and factious man.\* In vain was force sent to reduce it, and John Vitelli had lost his life in it. The people despairing of obtaining pardon, and being animated by Boccolino, defended themselves with a ferocious valour, and were ready, rather than return under the ecclesiastical government, to give themselves up to the Turks, whom they had invited by embassy from Velona. Lorenzo sent Gentile of Urbino, Bishop of Arezzo to treat with the rebellious Boccolino. So much was the name of Lorenzo able to effect in that man, that he suffered himself to be persuaded to yield; came to Florence, was well received and caressed by Lorenzo; and being afterwards called to Milan by Lewis, under great promises, he was there put to death†. After the capture of Sarzana, the Florentines prepared for fresh hostilities against the Genoese; but the latter, discouraged by the loss of Sarzana, placed themselves under the dominion or protection of the Duke of Milan.

Italy now enjoyed the rare example of an universal peace. Her serenity was alone clouded by the cruelties exercised by Ferdinand, King of Naples, who, after having pardoned the rebel barons, Coppola, the princes of Altamura, of Bisignano, the Dukes of Melfi, of Nardo, the Counts of Lauria, Ugento, Melito, and many others, and made a solemn promise to the pope that they should be respected, suddenly caused them to be arrested, and, notwithstanding the remonstrances made by the pope at such a violence, these unhappy men were, for the most part, put to death†; an example which justifies the maxim pronounced a century afterwards by a great man, that we should never take up the

\* Rainal. Ann. Eccles. Mich. Br. lib. 8.

† Istor. de Nap. Rer. Ital. Scr. tom. 23.

sword against the sovereign, but, if once drawn, the scabbard must be thrown away\*. A few other disturbances were heard of in this general peace, like a swelling sea after a tempest, produced by two tragic events, which took place in Romagna, and which followed in a short space of time.

After the death of pope Sixtus IV., Count Jerome Riario, from the eminent post in which he had  
1448. seen himself honoured and dreaded as much as the pope himself, had been obliged to retire to the humble dominion of his little states, Imola and Forli; and not comprehending that it was necessary to change his manners with his change of fortune, preserved all the pride and high-mindedness of his former condition without the power. He was, therefore, greatly detested by all his subjects. In Forli, where he resided, some citizens who had been aggrieved, and threatened by him, and amongst the rest Francis d'Orso, a very respectable man of the city, conspired his death; and assailing him suddenly on the 14th April in his palace, murdered him. The rebellious city took the part of the murderers; the sons of the count were arrested, together with his wife, Catherine Sforza, sister of the Duke of Milan. The fortress had remained faithful, and making a vigorous resistance was enabled to receive succours from the Duke of Milan and the Florentines. The rebels threatened Catherine with death, if she did not command the garrison to surrender up the fortress. The cunning woman promised to do so, and induced them to let her enter thereby into the fortress, whilst her sons remained hostages. Hardly was she entered when she exhorted

\* The maxim is of the celebrated Duke Alexander Farnese.—See Davila, Civil Wars of France.

the garrison to defend it courageously, nor did she suffer herself to be alarmed by the cries of the enemy, who threatened to hang up her sons before her eyes. She is praised by the writers of those times for her manly courage. But, if the indecent gestures and words are true with which she addressed the enemy from the walls, we must confess that she far surpassed the limits of female modesty\*. The constancy displayed by the defenders of the fortress, and the necessary succours arriving in time from Milan and Bologna, preserved the states to the family Riario. Forli, straitened on every side, was obliged to capitulate, and Octavian Riario, the eldest son, was proclaimed lord thereof.

The Florentines, who had been encouraged by the government of Milan, to send succours to it, profited of this event to recover the strong place of Piancaldoli, which, in the last wars, had been taken away from

\* All the historians of those times relate that she answered the enemy, who threatened her with the death of her sons, that she still possessed the prints to get fresh ones, and the most add that she shewed them to them from the top of the fortress. Who can pardon such a useless indecency, when constancy was sufficient to resist? Macch. Ist. lib. 8. Ammir. lib. 26. Sanuto, Lives of the Doges. The praises given by the greater part of the writers of those times to the impudent words of Catherine, prove the rude manners of the age. Allegretto Allegretti is one who gives most decency to the words of Catherine. She is described in the following words, by Cerretani: "She was wise, courageous, great, compact, fine face, spoke little: wore a gown of gauze with two arms of train, a bonnet of black velvet in the French fashion, a man's sash, and pocket full of gold ducats; a scimitar by her side, and was very much feared by the horse and foot soldiers, because that woman, with arms in hand was fierce and cruel. She was the illegitimate daughter of Count Francis Sforza, first captain of his age, and whom she was much like both in mind and daring, and was guilty of no vice, however little or common, being adorned with singular virtue."



them by the count. The Count Jerome had frequently, both by open force and secret snares, attempted the life of Lorenzo. It would have been natural in those times of crime, that he should have been suspected of having taken part in so horrid an action\*; nevertheless no one, at that time, had the smallest suspicion of it; nor do we know how a modern writer of the life of Lorenzo (Monsignor Fabbroni), could have awakened it: he has, however, been justly reprehended by the English historian, whom he has not been able to answer. The fine character, too, and the generous mind of this man, which rendered him alike incapable of so vile a crime, can be purified from every accusation by authentic documents, wherein we discover that the assassins had not the least acquaintance with Lorenzo†.

Another atrocious occurrence happened a short time afterwards, on the 3rd of June, in Faenza, where Frances Bentivoglio, wife of Galeot Manfredi, lord of that city,

\* Sanuto, *Lives of the Doges of Venice*. Rer. Ital. tom. 22.

† It is inferred from the confidential letter written to Lorenzo by Francis Orsi, that, after the deed, he has recourse to him, asking him succour, not as he would have done to an instigator or accomplice, but as to a person whom he hoped would be served by that crime. The same, too, is inferred more evidently from a letter of Stephan of Castrocaro to Lorenzo, mentioned by Fabbroni, where, relating in what manner the conspirators came to a determination about the action, every doubt of instigation is removed: they say that "they could no longer live with him, and fearing their own persons, came to the resolution of killing him." Read the remainder, which serves to exonerate Lorenzo from all suspicion. Raphael Volterrani, enemy of Lorenzo, a cotemporary writer, would not have omitted expatiating upon this article: his silence is a fresh proof like that of Michael Bruto. Finally, it is to be observed, that if the murder of the count had taken place by a conspiracy of Lorenzo, and, in order to change the state, the Florentine troops would have been found ready, after the blow had been struck.

renewed the tragic events attendant upon Clytemnestra. She was daughter of John Bentivoglio, Prince of Bologna, and had married Galeot by the mediation of Lorenzo. Galeot had not all those delicate regards which the daughter of Bentivoglio demanded. Rude in his manners, and coarse in his love, he often preferred a vulgar rival to her. The bitter reproaches made by the wife, had been answered by the husband in a brutal manner, and even by blows. The enraged father, taking her home again, threatened to attack the states of Faenza, but Lorenzo de Medicis interfered, and the two married people were again pacified and united: but Galeot, persisting in his usual behaviour, and Frances being agitated by the fury of jealousy, determined to cause her husband to be put to death. Having concealed four as-

sassins in her chamber, she feigned herself sick,  
 1499. when Galeot, going to see her, was assailed by the former; but as he defended himself bravely, she leaped out of bed, and made sure of him with her own hands, by plunging the steel into the bowels of her husband\*. Bentivoglio and Bergamino, commissary of the Duke of Milan in Forli, appeared to have taken part in the conspiracy, since both were ready to hasten with their troops to take possession of Faenza: but the Faentians loved their deceased lord, and taking up arms, and being favoured by the inhabitants of Val di Lamone, excited particularly by the Florentines, they expelled their enemies, made Bentivoglio prisoner, and killed Bergamino. Faenza had been recommended to the Florentines, and it was of great importance to them that no greater power should occupy it. Their commissary, Anthony Boscoli was

\* The description of this event is found in the Medicean archive, in a letter to Lorenzo of Anthony Boscoli, who was commissary in Faenza of the republic.—Alleg. Alleg. Diar. Sanesi.

there, and having been respected during the tumult, interfered in name of the Florentine people in favour of Bentivoglio, who was taken to Modigliana; and afterwards set at liberty, he came in person to Cafaggiolo, to offer his thanks to Lorenzo. His daughter was sent back to Bologna, and by the support of the Florentines, who speedily hastened with the troops they kept in the Lunigiana, that government was established in Astorre, son of the deceased, of whom the Florentine government continued guardian and protector.

Isabella, the daughter of the Duke of Calabria, sailed from Naples for Genoa, to marry the young Duke of Milan; but the fleet which conveyed her first put in at Leghorn, where this princess was received with all honours by the Florentines, who sent three public ambassadors to that city to compliment her; but the young Peter, son of Lorenzo, who went privately on account of his father, far surpassed them all in magnificence. This matrimony which it appeared was to secure the peace of Italy, was the foundation of its ruin. Lewis continued to reign over the states of Milan in the name of the nephew, whereby the discontent increased between those states and the court of Naples. This, however, was in great part quelled by the prudence of Lorenzo, who wished for peace, and made every one who wished to break it dread him as an enemy. Gaining those persons who possessed influence in the councils of sovereigns by his mild manners, his powerful eloquence, by his unremitting assiduity and princely presents, he instilled into them at once a desire for moderation and peace. No citizen or prince of Italy ever gained more respect and consideration both from government and private individuals. He was now, indeed, at the very summit of his greatness. An

arbiter of Italy, he had nothing to fear from the Venetians: the humbler lords of Romagna were his friends and dependants: Bentivoglio owed to him his liberty and his life; the Lord of Faenza the government of that city, and the defence of his states; whilst those of Imola and Forli, still young and minors, had need of the power and the councils of Lorenzo to maintain themselves. The pope, whose son was his son-in-law, looked to him for the aggrandizement of his family; and in order to give him a testimony of esteem, besides having communicated to him the list of the cardinals who were appointed to attend to his council, he conferred that dignity upon his son John at the tender age of only seventeen years\*.

<sup>1490.</sup> The wishes of the princes of Italy were therefore regulated by that of Lorenzo, who directed them to the public advantage and to maintain the general tranquillity.

In this interval of peace, sciences, letters, and the fine arts, continued to flourish more and more in Florence and throughout Tuscany. Lorenzo had inherited not only the love and the generosity displayed by his ancestors for letters, but what is of higher importance, he was also himself highly versed in literature, and favoured professors from an impulse of genius and an esteem he *felt* for them, rather than from that cold reflection which so many princes are wont to indulge thereon. His house was the temple of Minerva; the most celebrated men of genius and learning were rather the friends and companions; than the dependants of Lorenzo. Provided by his munificence and favour with large rewards and honourable stipends, they cultivated

\* Besides the many ancient writers, such as Valori, Ammirato, Macchiavel, &c., consult Fabbroni Vita Laur. and the documents at the end.

letters in tranquillity, and handed down their luminous names to posterity, in union with those of the protecting family. His villas were the delightful retreats of these men, and Careggi listened within her walls to a philosophical language adorned with the grace of imagination, as the portico of Athens had resounded therewith formerly from the mouth of Plato. Lorenzo, inferior to his grandfather in knowledge of merchandise and commerce, the minute details of which, whence the great profits arise, were not much adapted to his elevated and generous mind, encountered various losses from his factors and servants who abused his confidence. On this account he was more devoted to agriculture, and acquired great possessions in the Volterranean, in the Pisan, and in the Pistoiese, districts. The picturesque valley of Asciano, which, were it not for the stagnant water, would be still one of the most delicious situations, had seduced him to pass there his hours of leisure, and the fancy of Poliziano found therein the nature which at times so playfully imitates art\*. But the villa of Cajano, or poetically *Ambra*, built from the ground by Lorenzo, was the place where this learned man found more room to expatiate with his fancy. Inferior to Cosmo in commercial knowledge, he surpassed both him and all his descendants in other qualities: he was more intelligent in political affairs, and in times far more difficult, he held the balance of Italy in his hands. The new golden age for arts and letters, a rival to that of Augustus, and which is registered under the pontificate of his son Leo, was already much advanced under the father, to whom the name would more properly

\* Di natura arte par che per diletto  
L'imitatrice sua scherzando imiti.

TASSO *Polit. Epis. ad Lauren. Mabill. Iter. Italicum.*

belong. Profound in the greatest affairs, eloquent  
 1492. even to persuade the most obstinate; mild and  
 affable, he possessed a character the most adapted to  
 make his power tolerated in a republic, to which, when  
 strengthened by a superiority of talents, mankind, who  
 would be equal by constitution, more easily pay homage.  
 His prudence and wise foresight\* are discovered as in  
 a glass in the wise instructions he gave the cardinal his  
 son on sending him to Rome. In private society he  
 was amiable; his jests genteel and ready, his salt polite  
 and lively; and irony was the ordinary arm of Lorenzo,  
 an arm by so much the more sharp when rendered keen  
 by good manners. His physical and moral sensibility  
 induced him to pleasure, and his youthful inclinations  
 and verses prove the irresistible force of nature†. His  
 pious mother Lucrezia, and the Bishop Gentile his tutor,  
 had, however, early modelled his heart to Christian  
 religious piety, whence we often discover in this man  
 (as happens in minds extremely sensible) the transports  
 both of pleasure and of devotion; and in the same fervid  
 style hear him sing at times sublime hymns to the  
 Creator, as he would at others deify the object of his  
 pleasures. Attached by principle to the fundamental  
 dogma of the immortality of the soul, which spreads a  
 sweet balsam of consolation over irremediable mis-  
 fortunes; a dogma, which if it ever vacillated, it would  
 be necessary (as Cicero has said of another stoic philo-  
 sophy) to endeavour to maintain with all possible  
 support, he was wont to say that he is dead even to this  
 life, who believes not in a future‡.

\* Fabbr. Vita Laur. nota 178.

† Read his verses, and the comment upon them.

‡ Valori Vita Laur.

We may conclude that Lorenzo is the brightest ornament of the Medicean family, and the title of *Magnificent*, which was given him from the grandeur and magnificence he displayed in all his actions, is the smallest eulogy he deserved. He was honoured with ambassadors and with presents from the most powerful foreign princes, such as the great Mahomet, and the Soldan of Egypt. Amongst the presents he received from the latter, Italy again beheld the very rare beast found in Abyssinia called the *giraffa*, which the Roman power once so frequently drew from the deserts of Africa to place before the eyes of the conquering nation of the world.

But Lorenzo enjoyed not long his glory in the tranquillity of Italy. A lingering and painful disease had long tormented him; the gouty humour, inherited from his father, had fixed itself in his stomach and caused him insufferable pains. The last glorious spectacle he enjoyed was the day on which his son took the cardinal's hat. The pomp with which the magistrates attended this ceremony\*, the joy and the applause with which the citizens accompanied the function, were, as it were, the last scene with which Lorenzo closed the fable of his life. His malady increasing, he caused himself to be taken to Careggi, where, visited by his learned friends, he joked with them even amidst his spasms. His last moments, full of virtue, and religious piety, are written in detail by Poliziano†. The rigid monk Jerome Savonarola, an enemy of the house of Medicis, and detractor of Lorenzo, came to visit him, but was obliged to confess himself his admirer. His malady already rebelling against the pompous medley of vain

\* Ammir. lib. 26.

† Epist.

medicines and of Leoni, of Lazzaro, of Ticino, and Avogadri \*, brought him to his death-bed on the 9th of April, at the age of forty-four. His wife Clarissa Orsini, although married to him more from family convenience than love, was tenderly beloved by him, and had been dead four years. By her, besides the females, he had three boys. Peter, the Cardinal John, and Julian.

Later events proved how immature the death of Lorenzo was, and how much Italy suffered therefrom. In fact, let us suppose for a moment that he had only arrived at, or at least approached the age of his grandfather. Not only the arrival of Charles VIII. in Italy

\* The folly of those sovereigns may serve as instruction to mankind, and consolation to modern physicians. Avogadri, one of the most celebrated physicians of those days, after many unintelligible descriptions of drugs, says, "It is necessary to have a certain precious stone of a green colour called *elitropia*, and bind it in a golden ring so that it may touch the flesh, and wearing it then on the left hand on the ring finger, the pain will never return: "*est autem divine res et miraculosa.*" Lett. of the Medicean Archive, Fabb. not. 218. Lazzaro of Ticino, called in the last disease, prescribed the dust of gems and pearls. The unfortunate Leoni, who bore the blame of the death of Lorenzo, was the most judicious, since he only proposed for the most part mineral waters: but had the misfortune that so desirable a man died immaturesly under his care. The indiscreet public rarely pardons the physician in such cases. The wretched Leoni was found dead in a well either at Careggi or S. Gervasio, and was the victim of his art. Few will believe that he threw himself into it, and he would be the first example of the suicide of a physician because he had not healed a patient. If he was found at S. Gervasio we may infer that he was flying, and that overtaken, he was precipitated into a well by his persecutors. The respectable testimonies of Sannazzaro, Ammirato, Allegro Allegretti, Diar. Sen. and Cambi, who lived at that time, prevail over that of Poliziano, who had every interest to conceal this first furious action of his new protector, Peter de Medicis. See the manuscript history of Cerretani.



would never have taken place, but Lorenzo would have seen his son elevated to the dignity of pope, and by regulating his government, what a golden age would have followed throughout Italy and Tuscany? We can, indeed, only suppose it would have been so: but fancy, guided by reason, may expatiate at her option in that imaginary age, and contemplate Italy fortified against the attacks of foreigners, united by a stronger bond, more flourishing in laws and arts, and free from all those melancholy vicissitudes which happened to her in so short a space of time. If the son had suffered himself to be governed by the counsels of the father, as may be supposed he would have done, the protestant reformation would not have taken place, and Germany, France, and England, would have avoided the many long and obstinate wars, and the effusion of so much blood.— But let us abandon this pleasing dream.

Peter, his eldest son, inherited the authority, and offices, but not the talents, of his father. The ambassadors of many princes of Italy and foreigners, in honouring the death of Lorenzo by a public performance of funeral rites in the presence of the magistrates of the republic, omitted not to make known the desire of their masters, that the son should remain in possession of the authority of the father, which, however, was evinced the most earnestly by the ambassadors of the king of France.

The death of Lorenzo was soon followed by that of the pope, a pacific prince. This was another misfortune for Italy, which was rendered still greater by the qualities possessed by his successor. Alexander VI. was a Spaniard of the house of Borgia. Few are ignorant of the scandalous vices of this pontiff; for even writers the most accustomed to cover the frailties of the heads of the church venture not to cloak them. Ambition,

lust, perfidy, were the principal, but not the only, stains upon his character. Not scrupulous in the choice of his means, he thought every thing lawful whereby he might attain his ends. He was nephew of Calistus III., cardinal vice-chancellor of the church for thirty-six years, and possessed immense riches, which he employed unsparingly and without scruple in the purchase of votes for the popedom\*. He had already four natural sons, and one female known to the public, who were not unlike their father in the vices for which they were notorious. Although ecclesiastical decorum was wont to convert the name of child into that of nephew, Alexander considered himself so superior to every worldly appearance, that he ordered them to be called his children†.

The serene peace of Italy now began to be overshadowed. Milan and Naples, which the prudence displayed by Lorenzo, and the dread they had of his influence, held in peace, began to threaten each other when this obstacle no longer existed‡. The ferocious Duke of Calabria, less prudent than the father, would no longer suffer that his daughter and her husband were only sovereigns by name. Anthony Gennaro went as ambassador to Lewis Sforza, intimating to him that he should leave the government of those states to their true

\* Mur. Ann. Amm. Ist. lib. 26. Guic. Ist. lib. 1.

† Guicc. ib.

‡ Guicciardini, Ist. d'Ital. lib. 1., says, that the three principal persons of Italy, Lorenzo, Lewis Sforza, and the King of Naples, were compared to Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus, the first three citizens of the Roman republic. As Cæsar and Pompey were held in bridle by Crassus, for fear that wherever they were cast the balance would preponderate; so Lorenzo was a kind of isthmus, which hindered the two seas from dashing against each other. It would not be *mal-à-propos* to quote the verse of Ovid :

Si parva licet componere magnis.

master, who was now arrived at the age of twenty years. Lewis dissimulated, and promised to do so. Piero, or Peter, de Medicis, however, instead of preserving an equal balance between those two rivals, soon discovered his partiality for Naples, by following the counsels of Orsini, with whom, both on the side of his mother and wife, he was closely bound by ties of kindred. Although he endeavoured to conceal himself, it was not easy for his disposition to escape the foresight of Lewis. A little event gave the first signs of it. It had been proposed by him that the ambassadors of all the princes allied with the King of Naples, Florentine republic, the Duke of Milan, &c., in complimenting the new pope, should present themselves together. Peter de Medicis, from vanity, was averse to this measure, as he wished, by a solitary ceremony, to display the whole pomp of his equipages, which he would be prevented from doing in confusion with the others. He was seconded by Gentile, Bishop of Arezzo, an eloquent man, who having already prepared his oration, was ambitious of pronouncing it, which he would not have the opportunity of doing, as Anthony de Bottino, one of the royal ambassadors, was already fixed upon to deliver it, if the embassy presented itself in one body. Peter did not dare openly to oppose it, but made the King of Naples act for him, who was easily induced to oblige him. Lewis, who discovered all the stratagem, conceived less anger than suspicion when he perceived what a close confidence already existed between the king and Peter\*. The dark and suspicious mind of Lewis, having penetrated into the mystery, began, as the only means of maintaining himself, to contrive the ruin of the royal house of Naples.

\* Guicc. Ist. d'Ital. lib. 1. Amm. Ist. lib. 26.

The avidity of reigning was the first and most violent of his passions. He was prepared for any crime in order to satisfy it. Skilful and prudent in affairs, he was pusillanimous in danger, and ready to break his faith whenever the doing so availed him\*.

Charles VIII. set up his pretensions to the kingdom of Naples, which were however doubtful, and had need of the force of arms and victory in order to become evident to the eyes of the public. Charles, Duke of Angiers, brother of the holy King Louis of France, had possessed that kingdom both by right of conquest and investiture; but the rights of his descendants (amongst whom the House of Hungary had more just pretensions than King Robert, as has been shewn in its place,) had been almost lost by falling amongst the females, or dispersed in the many adoptions, which the two Queens Jane abused. The latter queen of this name, heiress of this kingdom, adopted for her son, first Alphonso, King of Arragon and of Sicily, but afterwards disinheriting him upon the score of ingratitude, she adopted his rival, Lewis III. of Angiers, who dying a few months before Jane, it was said that she had left in her will Regnier, Duke of Angiers and Count of Provence her heir, not without report, however, that the will had been substituted†.

The disinherited Alphonso returning then upon the stage, the two rivals had recourse to arms, Regnier was overpowered, and the crown established in Alphonso and his legitimate descendants. Regnier, dying without male issue, had left his states and his rights to his nephew Charles who also dying without heir, disposed of his estates

\* Such is nearly the character Comines gives of him who had often, and for a long time, treated with him.

† See, amongst many others who speak of the succession, Guicciard. Ist. d'Ital. lib. 1.

and pretensions in favour of Louis XI., King of France, from whom Charles VIII. had consequently derived them. Hence the doubtful origin of the rights of this king to the throne of Naples, and the slender thread by which they hung together. His father always abhorred Italian conquests; but the juvenile ardour of Charles, alike greedy of glory and extraordinary enterprise, gladly listened to those who counselled him to undertake the latter,—and, therefore, gave the more cordial reception to the persons who were sent to induce him thereto. The head of the embassy was the Count of Cagazzo, son of Sanseverino, the Count Barbiano, of Belgiojoso, and Galeazzo Visconti\*. They found there the Prince of Salerno, who had already some time since fled from the assassinating claws of Ferdinand. He was a relation of Sanseverino, whence, in unison, they made use of all political arts with the king and the ministers to prevail upon him to come to Italy,—offering him, too, on the part of Lewis Sforza, assistance both in men and money.

In the mean time suspicions had arisen between the pope and the King of Naples. The pope, desirous of exalting his sons, had demanded in marriage for Jeoffrey a daughter of Alphonso, with some principality in dowry. Alphonso, who detested the pontiff, although he did not openly refuse, introduced so many delays and obstacles to the fulfilment of the request, that Alexander

\* Guicciardini and Giovio mention only Belgiojoso, putting into his mouth studied orations in the council of the king, which arose in the fancy of those historians, and are therefore very different from each other. It is necessary to pay deference to Cominis, who was present, who mentions not the other two, but the Count of Cagazzo head of the embassy. It may be that Lewis had given particular instructions to Belgiojoso, who remained alone with the king.

perceived he had been deluded. Thereto was added the purchase made of Anguillara, Cervetere, and other castles, (sold by the young Francis Cibo,) at the instigation and with the money of the King of Naples without permission of the pope, by Virginio Orsino, relation of the Medici, and dependant of the king, which castles, being near to Rome and well garrisoned with troops might have held her in subjection. The pope no longer doubted of the hostile disposition of Alphonso, and the little affection the Florentines bore him. Instigated, therefore, by Lewis, he joined him and the Venetians, who rejoiced at thus seeing an alliance broken, which bridled their ambitious views. Neither the king nor

the Florentines being invited to it, they perceived  
1493. it was made against them. The pope and the government of Milan armed themselves. The former prepared to take by force the places which Orsini would not cede with good will, when the return from France of Belgiojoso, and the appearance of Perron di Baccie\*, French ambassador to the courts of Italy, unveiled the designs of Lewis. This man presented himself at Venice, Milan, Florence, Sienna, to the pope, shewing forth that the King of France, wishing to pass into Italy, in order to re-conquer, by force of arms, the throne of Naples, upon which he had indubitable rights, caused the same to be made known to those governments, hoping that, as his ancient friends, they would not only offer him no impediment, but even lend him assistance and support. Lewis feigned to deliberate: but his dissimulation deceived no one. The other governments gave those courteous but ambiguous answers, which, without binding themselves to any performance, appear to promise much, and with which politics has particularly taught the weak to shelter themselves from the powerful.

The French, however, advised by Lewis to extort some promise from the Florentines, which bore the air of a declaration, demanded of their ambassadors at Paris, that they should bind themselves to add, at least, one hundred horses to the suite of the king, as a token of their friendship for him. The former refused, and were threatened with the loss of their commerce in France, which was very extensive. Peter de Medicis made the King of Naples perceive the necessity of this measure for the preservation of his own authority in Florence, the citizens of which would not patiently suffer that loss, and that he could be more useful to him by the title of Ally of the French, whereby he could also assume the quality of mediator. The King of Naples nevertheless complained of this step, and dreaded the contagion of example in the other Italian princes\*. Seeing the danger increase, he endeavoured to regain the pope, let him receive the satisfaction he wished from Orsini, gave a natural daughter of Alphonso to Geoffrey, son of the pope, with the dowry of the principality of Squillace and other lordships. He desisted, too, from the demands that the Duke of Milan should take upon himself the reins of government. All these measures, taken too late, were useless with Lewis, who having drawn the sword, could not retrocede. They gained him, however, the mind of the pope, but no great confidence could be placed in a man of that character, and in whose court the Cardinal Ascanio Sforza played one of the principal parts, a man who had so greatly contributed to raise Alexander to the pontifical throne. Lewis, continually dissimulating, at times, with the King of Naples,

\* So says Giucciardini and Ammirato : Giovo calls him Obigui.

at times with the pope, and with Peter de Medicis, made it believed he was acting to distract the King of France, from the thoughts of war\*, and was easily believed, as the passage of Charles VIII. appeared dangerous, or, at least, very expensive, even for him. It might have been easily thought that a design, created by passion, would be extinguished by a more mature reflection; but he used mild words, in order that, whilst the preparations were perfecting in France, the other powers of Italy, taking him for an enemy, might not attack him. He secretly, however, endeavoured to induce all the Italian princes, either by promises or threats, to offer no resistance to the French. The old Ferdinand, having tried in vain many means of reconciliation with Lewis, and the King of France, sent the latter another ambassador, Cammillo Pandone, with the power even (as it was said) of offering him an annual tribute if he would desist from the enterprise, but scarcely was he arrived at the confines of France, when it was intimated to him, as to a hostile envoy, to withdraw†. The old King Ferdinand, borne down by the thoughts of the war, afflicted by the storm that threatened his kingdom, had the fortune to be snatched away by death, in his seventieth year, from the view of the ruin of his house. He was a prince of far greater vices than virtues; amongst the former, particularly, may be mentioned his bad faith. Alphonso succeeded peaceably, and received the investi-

\* Guicc. Ist. lib. 1. Jov. Hist. lib. 1.

† Guicc. Ist. lib. 1. Giovio, lib. 1., says he went to Paris, but had no audience of the king, and that being an eloquent man, he began in public to declaim against that enterprise, showing the danger of it, and discovering the perfidious character of Lewis.



ture of that kingdom from the Roman pontiff, to whom he had shown himself so complacent, and the French ambassadors reclaimed in vain. Every hope of an agreement being at an end, Alphonso prepared, with all possible vigour, for a war which had now become altogether inevitable.

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## ESSAY III.

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### TUSCAN COMMERCE.

WE have seen Florence, once humble and poor, rising rapidly in population, in riches, waging the most expensive wars, raising the greatest loans, making presents to sovereigns, and almost all the Italian powers, erecting sumptuous edifices, and becoming one of the most opulent cities of those ages, the history of which we have now given. Pisa, likewise, now distinguished herself as one of the most potent Italian republics; whilst the other cities of Tuscany have been more populous and wealthy. It is necessary briefly to inquire into the source whence so much opulence was derived.

The basis of their power consisted in the industry with which they applied to commerce, in all times a fountain of riches to nations: but in order to form a clear idea of the commerce of the Italian cities in the lower ages, it becomes necessary to offer a short picture of this commerce, as carried on by the ancients. Rome was probably the only city enriched by conquest, without the industry of commerce. The conquered provinces became tributary to Rome; and moderate as the tributes might be, the vast extension of these provinces drove into a little space, by one continued course, the riches of the most beautiful and most fertile parts of the globe then known\*. The lofty Romans disdained commer-

\* The Roman empire comprehended about 120,000,000 of inhabitants.

cial industry, as they did the exercise of the fine arts, although they highly esteemed the latter; nor would they boast of any other art than that of governing nations\*. The industry, therefore, of the subject provinces was the only means by which the gold, which the contributions carried to Rome in such great quantity, could be brought back to them: commerce formed the principle of the circulation of that money, which, otherwise, increasing in too great a proportion in the capital of the world, and becoming stagnant in it, would have produced unexpected mischief.

Asia, soft and effeminate Asia, has, at all times, by a kind of contagion, communicated her delicacy with her merchandise to Europeans, who, in every age, have made her productions the great object of their commerce. The costly and elegant Asiatic trifles had hitherto been transported to Rome; and Egypt was the country through which this commerce was carried on. The great Alexander, who recognised its importance, in the power of Tyre, whose riches placed her in a situation to make so long a resistance to his victorious arms, had seriously applied himself thereto, and, by the judicious foundation of Alexandria, had opened from Asia to Europe the most natural course for Indian produce, which has continued for so long a time. Ptolomy, the son of Lagos, his friend, and successor in Egypt, built the port of Berenice, upon the Arabian gulf†, which became the emporium of that commerce; whence, the

\* Virgil clearly says so, and Virgil spoke with general sentiments:

*Excudent alii sperantia mollius æra  
Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus,  
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento  
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.*

† Strabo, lib. 18.

merchandise being carried to Coptos by a long road by land\*, and afterwards down a short canal to the Nile, was transported by the latter river to Alexandria. Even after the conquest of Egypt by the Romans, the Indian wares followed this course, with the only difference, that instead of a long and crooked navigation, which they had undertaken, by coasting along Asia, a more direct and shorter road was discovered, by the disposition of the periodical winds having been learnt†. The merchandise brought thence to Rome consisted of nearly the same articles as in our days: amongst the oriental gems, which Pliny makes mention of in so great a number‡, the pearls were the most esteemed, and the most costly; the pearl given by Julius Cæsar to Servilia, mother of Brutus, and the other celebrated pearls of Cleopatra and Lollia Paulina§, still excite the admiration of the richest and most pompous nations; as the drugs, the balsams, the immense quantity of aromatic herbs||,

\* The road by land was not less than two hundred and seventy-eight miles, by the desert of Thebes; that monarch, however, caused cisterns and inns to be erected where water was to be found.

† This wind was called Hippalus, from the name of the first navigator, who made use of it. *Peripl. maris Erythrei*. The gulf of Siam appears to have been the end of this navigation.

‡ Plin. *Hist. Nat.* lib. 37.

§ Plin. *Hist. Nat.* lib. 9, cap. 35. The pearl given to Servilia is valued at about 100,000 sequins: that of Cleopatra, dissolved in vinegar at the supper given to Anthony, from vanity, that the supper might be costly, about 300,000 sequins. Lollia Paulina, when she was dressed, did not carry about with her less value than 4,000,000 of French livres. The Roman ladies wore pearls attached, not only to the bindings of their shoes, but upon them, and around the shoes themselves.

|| Pliny has employed two books, 12 and 13, in the description of the spices, aromatics, and balsams.

employed in sacrifices and funerals\*, the silks, the cottons, &c. &c. Fertile Egypt and Syria also sent into Italy their productions of nature and art. The art of painting human figures, animals, and flowers, in device upon cloth and carpets, was known to the ancients, as well as the richest embroidery, and the comb of Alexandria rivalled the needle of Babylon†.

These wares, which were brought to Rome, and the remainder of Italy, were for the most part paid for in ready money, and only a few things given in barter, such as cloths of wool, coral, storax, glass, wines of various sorts, and metals‡. Even upon the ruin of the empire of the west, if the misery, into which Italy sunk, caused the Indian merchandise to be no longer sought for, and the barbarous conquerors disdained them, this commerce may be said to have gained new vigour on the

\* A great quantity of aromatic herbs was burnt in the sacrifices, and a still greater number in the funerals, in burning the bodies. At the funeral of Silla, two hundred and ten pounds of aromatic herbs were thrown upon the pile. In the funeral of Poppea, Nero is said to have caused as much cinnamon and cassia to be burnt, as was produced in the country whence it was drawn.

† *Alexandri effigiem deliciis variantibus monstrabunt.*—Trebell. Poll. in Hist. Aug. V. See there the learned notes of Salmasio. The painting device was an art particularly of the Egyptians; embroidery of the Assyrians. See Martial:

*Hæc tibi Memphitis tellus dat munera, victa est  
Pectine niliaco jam Babilonis acus.*

In the sacking made by the Arabs, of the capital of Persia Madayir, (an. 637,) a superb carpet adorned a hall of the royal palace, forming a quadrate of sixty cubits: on the ground was painted a paradise or garden; the trees, the fruits, the flowers, were imitated by gold and silver, and the borders were formed by a green fillet: it was cut in pieces by the barbarous conquerors, and divided as booty amongst the chiefs, and so great was the value of it, that the part alone, which belonged to Ali, was sold for 20,000 drachms.—Abulfeda.

‡ Arrian. Viagg. in Eretrio.

side of Greece, and Constantinople became the centre of luxury and elegance. The Arabs, however, having conquered Egypt, and the hatred between them and the christians being so great, all commerce was cut off. The luxury and effeminacy of the Greeks not suffering them to continue without Indian merchandise, it was attempted to penetrate by another road to the source thereof, by a long and troublesome journey. These sources were two, China and India. The former was opened to them at Chensi, the most western part of China, whence the wares, transported in a journey of eighty or an hundred days to the banks of the river Oxos, were embarked down this river to the Caspian Sea, and passed up the river Cyrus, as far as it was navigable, where the river Phasis pours itself into the Euxine Sea, at no great distance; the merchandise was transported by land to the latter river, and thence arrived, by an uninterrupted navigation, at Constantinople. By the second source, the Indian wares passed up the river Indus, as far as it was navigable, and were afterwards taken by land to Oxos, and thence, by the road we have described, to the Greek capital: and for about two centuries Europe was provided with oriental wares, by this difficult and dangerous road.

In the mean time, although the Arabs, by a religious fanaticism, directed all their attention to war, they were not so greatly blinded as not to perceive the advantages of commerce, and pushing their course courageously at sea beyond other navigators they passed the gulf of Siam, the limit of the former, and arriving at Canton, in China, opened a regular commerce between that kingdom, Aradia, Persia, and Egypt\*, whilst every commu-

\* This journey is described by the Arab Abuzeid to Hasan of Siraff, ann. 851.—See Robertson, *An Historical Disquisition*, &c.—In

nication still remained cut off between them and the christians. Fanaticism, however, as a kind of fever of no long duration, soon evaporated in the Arabs, and consequently their hatred towards the christians diminished. Egypt appears to have been visited by the Italians, and particularly by the Venetians since the year 828\*. Nor would it have been difficult for the reciprocal enmities to have been appeased in the long course of years, when another religious enthusiasm awakened itself in the west, at a time when that of the east was very much weakened.

The crusades gave new animation to the religious war between Asia and Europe; but if, on the one side, this enthusiastic movement was contrary to commerce, by disuniting the minds of nations, it terminated in proving advantageous to it, since the maritime powers of the Mediterranean, Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, by transporting the arms, the warriors, and particularly provisions to those armies which were marching in the east, got better acquainted with the situation of the countries adapted to commerce, and the manner of profiting from them. Active and commercial republics, and particularly the three mentioned, had (as we have already seen before this epoch) arisen in Italy from the ruin of the feudal system: but they were probably preceded in maritime power and commerce by the people of Amalfi, who had been navigators and merchants since the ninth century. Even in the eleventh their maritime power

the exposition of this journey tea and porcelain are described for the first time.

\* In that year the Venetians, against the orders, however, of the government, going into Egypt, seized the body of Saint Mark.—Andrew Dandolo.

continued, as described to us in a barbarous poem\*; and William Tyrius tells us that the Amalfians were the first to traffic in the east†. If, indeed, one of the foundations of marine affairs, the compass, be not an invention of Goias, an Amalfian, no other city appears to have a juster right to arrogate it to herself; since, amongst other conjectures which tend to prove it‡, this nautical instrument was her coat of arms. Venice, Genoa, and Pisa, afterwards not only rivalled, but surpassed, her. At the time of the crusades, these three republics raised themselves to the highest possible summit of power and opulence. The vicissitudes they underwent, however, were various, and jealousy of commerce frequently placed arms in their hands, with which they contended for the sovereignty of the seas. Pisa, after a luminous epoch in navigation and commerce, saw her power and riches eclipsed before the other two. Even since times of old, according to Strabo and others, she had been a naval and commercial power; but as we must seek for her ancient enterprises amidst the mists

\* *Urbs hæc dives opum, populoque referta videtur,  
Nulla magis locuples argento, vestibus, auro,  
Portibus innumeris, ac plurimus urbe moratur  
Nauta maris, cœlique vias aperire peritus:  
Huc et Alexandri diversa feruntur ab urbe  
Regis et Antiochi: hæc fæta plurima transit,  
Hic Arabes, Indi, Siculi, noscuntur et Afri:  
Hæc est gens totum prope nobilitata per orbem  
Et mercanda ferens, et amans mercata referre.*

GUGLIELMO PUGLIESSE, *de Normannis.*

† *Hujus regionis habitatores primi merces peregrinas, et quas oriens non noverat ad superius nominatas partes (nempe Egyptum Jerosolimam) lucri facendi caussa inferre tentarunt.*—So says William Tirimis of an epoch prior to the capture of Jerusalem.

‡ See Tiraboschi.



of conjecture, we will leave them to diligent antiquarians, and limit ourselves alone to more authenticated events. It appears that, before the commercial road was opened to the East Indies and China by Egypt; Constantinople, the Black Sea, and some ports of Syria, were the places where Europeans provided themselves with Indian merchandise, transported by the roads we have above described. There the merchants of the three republics met, and a most important proof of the ancient power of Pisa is, that a mercantile establishment existed in the Black Sea not far from the mouth of the Tanais, which bore the name of Pisan Port \*. In proportion afterwards as the conquering arms of the crusaders conquered the cities and the ports of Syria, the Pisans, their allies, gained establishments and exemptions. A long list might be given of European princes who were conquerors of the east, and who conceded to the Pisans, in reward for the succours they received from them, ample privileges, both in the cities already conquered, and which they might still conquer†. The Pisan vessels sailed from the ports of Tyre, of Ptolemais, or Acre, from the other ports of Greece

\* See Balducci with Pagnini della Decima.

† We will mention a few of them: Boemond III., Prince of Antioch, concedes privileges to the Pisans, and partial exemptions from the duties, and the power of having a tribunal where causes are decided according to their own laws.—Murat. Antiq. Ital. Balduvin IV., King of Jerusalem, (anno 1182,) gives the Pisans a market in the city of Acon or Ptolemais.—Idem. Raimond, Count of Tripolis, concedes privileges to the same (anno 1187). Guido, King of Jerusalem, concedes to them privileges, and tribunal with a consul, (anno 1184). Conrad, Prince of Tyre, in 1191, Rapinus, Prince of Antioch, in 1212, also concede ample privileges to the Pisans.—See Murat. loc. cit. In the archive, too, of the cathedral of Pisa an authentic paper is found, wherein Tancredi, Prince of Antioch,

and the Black Sea, laden with the wares of the east for their own port\*, and thence to the peopled city, which wares, with little variation, were of the same description with those already mentioned, and brought to Italy from the most ancient times. The concourse of foreign merchants in the city is attested in the ridiculous lamentations made by the barbarous poet, Donizzone, who complains in the following verses, that Pisa, degraded by the presence of so many Mahomedan merchants, should possess, rather than Canossa, the ashes of the Countess Beatrice :

Qui perdit Pisas, videt illic monstra marina :  
 Hæc urbs Paganes, Turches, Libicis quoque Parthis  
 Sordida: Chaldei sua lustrant litora tetri ;  
 Sordibus a cunctis sum munda Canossa †.

The Pisans visited, for mercantile objects, both Africa and Spain, Majorca and Minorca, of which

grants them a street in this city and an establishment in the city of Lodicea, if they will take it. We omit many other documents of a like kind, in order not to increase the list.

\* Many have spoken with much uncertainty of the situation of the Pisan harbour, now interred, and no longer to be recognised. There is, moreover, a certain document of its position in the very interesting little work of Uzzano, entitled *Compassa a Navigare*, &c. That the harbour existed in his times there can be no doubt. The following is the description of it : “ The Pisan harbour is a harbour of chains, and has three towers, and without the tower has a clear depth of five paces. The way of knowing Porto Pisano is the following : without, towards Libeccio it has sands, where there is a tower, which bears the name of Melora, and is five miles distant from the same port towards the east. From the harbour there is a sand, upon which is a tower, of which a light-house is made ; and from hence, towards the east, there is a mountain, called Montenero. From Porto Pisano to the city of Pisa it has sixteen miles towards Maestro ; from the mouth of the Arno eight miles, by Sciroccio, towards the south.

† Lib. 1. cap. 20. Doniz.

latter they made a conquest, thus maintaining two establishments in the most remote limits of the navigation known in those times, viz., at Porto Pisano, near the mouth of the Tanais, and at Majorca and Minorca. (Baleari). The ports of Africa, Bugia, Tunis, and Algiers, were frequented by them; their power was adapted to make their commerce respected; and the cities of Tunis and others of Africa, which were frequently taken and sacked, felt the vengeance of the Pisan arms. Their fleet, too, ventured to attack Palermo, which, at this time, was a most populous city, and governed by the Saracens\*. Their fleet, having broken the chain of that port, entered it without opposition, burnt many ships, and carried away the richest booty, with the treasure of which the Pisans commenced the sumptuous edifice of their cathedral. Amalfi, too, taken by the Pisans, and all the expeditions they undertook of a similar nature, are proofs of their maritime power. Majorca and Minorca, (the Baleari,) Corsica, the establishments upon the coast of Syria and the Black Sea were a chain of positions fit to rule over the seas. The same is inferred from the number and magnificence of their fleets, either led against the enemy, or in succour of the crusaders; and, although their archbishop Daimbert arrived late with the fleet at the conquest of Jerusalem, nevertheless, so great was the power of the Pisans, that he ventured to enter into contest with the new king; pretended that Jerusalem and Jaffa should be ceded to him; and the pious Geoffrey, not daring to oppose the church with firmness, came to a pacific agreement with the archbishop or new patriarch, wherein Daimbert was contented that a fourth part of the city should be ceded

\* That the city of Palermo was really taken by the Pisans is not credible.—See Murat. *Annal. d' Ital.*

to him, with the agreement of reversion of the remainder to the church at the death of Geoffrey without issue\*. We are indebted to the Pisans for the first code of maritime laws† after the ruin of ancient jurisprudence in the barbarous ages.

The greatest commerce of the Pisans consisted in the transport of oriental merchandise into Europe; the productions however of their own soil, which was celebrated for its fecundity since remote ages‡, salt and ingenious manufactures, were another source of gain to them. Amongst the latter, the woollen manufacture appears to have been very extensive, since it formed a branch of trade§; and the society of industrious regulars, called the Humbled, (*gli Umiliati*), had established themselves in Pisa, brought the woollen manufacture to great perfection, and became the instructors therein to so many cities||. The iron of the island of Elba, and other metals, either raw or worked, were carried particularly to the East, which never abounded in them. Whilst the seat and the centre of commerce were still in Constantinople and in the ports of the Black Sea, revolutions broke out in the commerce of the east, in which the Venetians and the Genoese deprived each other alternately of the superiority.

In the fourth crusade, the European chevaliers, and

\* See Guglielmo di Tiro, lib. 9. cap. 15. 18. lib. 10. cap. 4. 7. 9., who, although priest and bishop, does not approve the pretensions of Daimberto.

† See Valsecchi Epist. de Vet. Pis., &c., and the 24th note of the learned work of navigation and commerce of Pisa.

‡ Strabone Geograph. l. 5.

§ Navigaz. e Comin. of Pisa, note 21.

|| Conradus Marchionis Monferrati filius Umiliorum Pisanorum societati in civitate Tyri et alibi multa privilegia donat ann. 1188.—Murat. Antiq. Ital.

particularly the French, turning themselves to that enterprise, after addressing the Genoese and Pisans in vain, had successful recourse to the Venetians, who displayed all their forces in this expedition. Here we discover their extraordinary power \*, as their fleet consisted of as many ships as could carry 4,000 horsemen, 9,000 bowmen, and 20,000 infantry with provisions for nine months. The sacred war terminated in a quarrel with the Greek Emperor, who was expelled by the crusaders from the throne, and Baldovin II., Count of Flanders, installed in his stead, (ann. 1204). The confederates divided the provinces of the Greek empire: the foresighted Venetians taking possession of the places most advantageous to their commerce, of a part of Peloponnesus, (where amongst other arts that of silk was established), and of many islands in the Archipelago; thus forming a chain of posts from the Adriatic to the Bosphorus †. Masters of the most important road to Asiatic commerce, they enjoyed for nearly sixty years the exclusive fruits thereof, when another revolution having chased the Latins from the empire re-conquered by the Greeks, (anno 1261), and the latter receiving powerful succours from the Genoese, the Venetians being driven out, the former obtained the most ample privileges. The Greek Emperor conceded to them the suburb of Pera, as a kind of feud, the exemption from every duty, and tax of import and export upon all merchandise. The Genoese, however, abusing the facilities granted them by the Greek Emperor, fortified Pera and other factories upon the coast, became more than the Greeks them-

\* See Sanuto, nella Raccolta, Rer. Ital. script. Murat.

† Dandol. Chron. apud. Murat. Rer. Ital. Script. v. 12. p. 328. Sanuto, Murat. vol. 22. p. 532.

selves, masters of the port of Constantinople, took possession of the Crimea, and consequently of the whole commerce of Asia, which was carried on by this road\*. Their power and pride was carried to such a height as not to permit the Greeks even to make sail beyond the mouths of the Danube without their permission, they pretended to an exclusive right in that sea, and imposed even a tax upon every ship that passed through the Bosphorus†. About twenty-three years after this happy event, at the time of their greatest power, the Genoese were attacked by their ancient rivals the Pisans. The events were various; but the fatal defeat of the Meloria, completely ruined the power of Pisa, which lost the rank of one of the first maritime and commercial nations. Successive discords further weakened her, and terminated with her falling in bondage to the Florentine republic.

This republic, from the smallest beginnings, had continued increasing even in midst of the civil discords with which she was always agitated: her industry, although directed towards all objects, was particularly occupied in the woollen trade, and in silk. Before the establishment of her government, Italy, humbled and oppressed, was hardly acquainted with the useful arts, and commerce. The barbarous conquerors of the north, who brought with them the habits of their cold climates, clothed themselves in skins‡. Those worn by the kings and the

\* Nicephor. Greg. lib. 11. c. 1., &c.—Foglietta. *Histor. Genuens.* apud. Grævium. *Thesau. Antiq. Ital.* 387. *De marinis Genuens. dignitate* ibid. 1486. Niceph. Greg. lib. 13. c. 12. Mur. *Annal.*

† Nicephor. Greg. lib. 18. c. 2. p. 1.—Gregory was eye-witness.

‡ The kings of the Huns, of the Goths, of the Vandals are frequently called *Pelliti reges*:

. . . . . *regesque Getarum*  
Respice *queis astro contempto, et vellere serum*  
*Eximius decor est tergis horrere ferarum.*

*In carmine de Provid. lib. Prosperienserto.*

great were of ermine, sable, of beaver, of rats of Pontus, whilst the lower classes of the people made use of those of lambs, goats, hares, foxes and other more common animals. Almost all the inhabitants of Italy were for a time covered with skins\*; and as a custom often arising from convenience and economy, is afterwards transformed by luxury, and rendered expensive, this happened also in skins, which being soft and delicate, served to adorn even ecclesiastics and nuns†, to such a degree that the majesty of councils was obliged to demean itself by restraining the luxury of women, who had renounced indeed the pleasures and pomp of the world, but who appeared to think it the greatest sacrifice of all to renounce their ornaments.

This northern luxury, however, could not last in climates so soft. This cause must have sensibly diminished it, the more so when the dominion of the barbarians ceased, and the tacit flattering homage paid them by imitating them in their garments, became no longer necessary. The liberty acquired by the Italian cities, when the chains were taken away, which violence and bad legislation imposed upon industry, made genius more alive to re-establish commerce and the arts that had been lost. Florence was amongst the first: her political

\* The great commerce carried on in skins is evident in the convention between the Ferrarese and the Mantuans in their markets.—Murat. Antiq. Ital. Diss. 25.

† “ In concilio Londoniensi, an. 1127, it was established, ut nulla Abbatissa vel sancti monialis carioribus utatur in dumentis quam agninis vel cattivis (di gatto).” In the constitutions of the Cardinal St. Angelo, year 1225: “ quælibet monialis habeat in anno tres camisas singulis duobus annis de vulpibus, leporibus et etiam agnis. Se aliqua voluerit pro altiori devotione agninis pellibus uti, habeat etiam quolibet anno duo superpellicea, alba et duo nigra quæ terram tangant.”

system was founded upon commerce. No useless person could hold any share in her government: all the population was therefore divided into trades, the number of which, although different in various times, was reduced to twenty-one; seven called the greater, and fourteen the lesser. From the latter the magistrates were taken, who were destined to govern the republic for a time; the nobles even, were either excluded from the government, or obliged to ascribe themselves to some of the former, if they desired to have any share in it. Landino justly considers these people as the industrious bees, which either permit no individual to remain idle, or expel him from their hive\*. In the revival of the arts, the most simple and easy are the first to be cultivated, and consequently those which appertain to the clothing the people. After the northern fashion of skins became greatly in disuse, the use of skins of common animals, void of hair, continued for a considerable time, and the great Florentine poet, and Villani, boast of the frugal simplicity displayed by the greatest citizens, who were clothed in plain skins. Wool, however, soon had the preference.

The following were the seven greater trades. 1. Judges and Notaries. 2. Merchants of French Cloths. 3. Money Changers. 4. Trade of wool. 5. Physicians and Apothecaries. 6. Silkmén and Mercers. 7. Furriers. The fourteen lesser trades comprehended the lower arts, all which were comprehended under some one of them. Each trade or art had its consul and captain with his ensign or banner, who brought it out either at an order of the magistrates, or a sound of the public bell, and collected all the persons under it

\* Ignarum fucos pecus à præsilibus arcent.—VIRG. *Georg.*



who belonged to that trade. Notwithstanding the ruin of the arts, which follows an invasion of barbarians, there are some, which from their necessity, from the materials being found before us, and from the facility of setting them at work by the rudest hands, can never be annihilated. Such is the art of spinning and weaving wool: wherever wool has existed, we may be assured the woollen trade has existed also, and amongst the most humble servants as well as the most illustrious heroines, women have at all times exercised that profession\*. Amidst the barbarisms of Italy and of the other countries of the ruined empire of the west, the easy manner of making coarse cloths was preserved. The finest, however, were worked in Greece, which still resisted the barbarous inundations, and were thence transported into Italy†. Florence became the seat of the trade of wool, not because she exclusively exercised so easy a trade, but from the industry she displayed in bringing it to perfection. Cloths were manufactured, too, in France and in Flanders, which were sent throughout Europe, but they were all inferior in fineness

\* Leaving aside the heroic fabulous times, Augustus, master of the most beautiful part of the world at that time known, in the greatest splendour of the Roman grandeur, did not wear any other garments than those which were worked by his wife Livia and by his daughters. Suet. Vita Aug. It is very natural that the Roman ladies should imitate the imperial family, but the ivory spindles heavier than common, and therefore less adapted to work, found in the excavations of Herculaneum, evince rather the luxury, than the desire, of working.

† That the greater part of the cloths and linens were brought from the Levant, is proved by their names for the most part Grecian, as—Crysoclava—Velum Holosericum—Vela di Basilici—Fundatum Alithinum—Vela tiria, Bizantina—Pannus Alexandrinus. Murat. Dissert., likewise Damask, from the city of that name.

to the Florentine, or at least to that perfection which Florentine art knew so well to give, even to foreign cloths. The trade of wool was already become of considerable importapce in Florence at the beginning of the thirteenth century, because this branch of trade already had its consuls\*. Although it be not true, as some have believed, that it was introduced into Florence by the Umiliati, she must still acknowledge herself indebted to them for a part of the perfection to which it had attained.

This religious order, born amidst misfortunes and persecutions †, has been one of the most advantageous

\* In the treaty of peace between the Florentines and the Siennese, an. 1202, the consuls of the trade of wool are mentioned.—Amm. lib. 1

† A great number of Lombards, particularly Milanese, were banished into Germany by Henry I., an. 1014. In order to console themselves for their evils, they joined in a devout society, which, as a sign of Christian humiliation they called the Humbled, (Umiliati). Professing to live by the work of their own hands they applied to various trades, and particularly the wool trade. Returning to their country in 1019, they preserved their manner of living, and created to themselves a head by the name of minister. They assembled on some particular days in houses purchased at the common expense; afterwards united together in convents, where they worked conjointly. They were all laymen down to 1140. An order of religious priests was then formed: although these did not work, they made a great number of laymen work, and directed their labours. He who presided was called *Merchant* (*Mercatore*.) The lamb was their coat of arms; as of the wool trade in Florence; their regulation was approved by Innocent III., and by other pontiffs. They acquired great riches. Their diligence and honesty made them sought for by the public government for various offices. In Como charge was given them of the weights and measures, and of whatever the integrity of commerce depends upon. In Florence, public chamberlains were created, and many other employments given them. They sometimes followed the armies, too, to regulate the expenses and take care of the ammunition. They had preachers, and authors, of whom a long

to human society. Professing the useful rule of living by the labour of their own hands, as many of the ancient monks were accustomed to, the art which above all, they turned their attention to cultivate, was the trade and art of making cloth, and carried it, or at least the refinements upon it, into many cities of Italy. It was introduced into Florence about the year 1239; and the community of that city took care to cherish an order which was so useful to their country\*. But after having learnt all the refinements to which these monks had brought the art, the industrious Florentines carried it much farther: the laws and wise regulations so much promoted the carrying it to perfection†, that there were

list may be seen in Tiraboschi, (*Humiliat. Hist.*), amongst whom, we must not omit Buonvicino, who distinguished himself in humanity and poetry in the thirteenth century, and is the first author of metre, which being afterwards attributed to Martelli, took the name of Martelliana. Their degeneracy and decay, however, is deplored in verse and prose by Picio, but the Cardinal Borromeo took every care to reform them, upon the request of Pius V. They resisted with force, and interposed the authority even of secular power. Being enraged against the reformer, they endeavoured to kill him whilst he was celebrating the mass, by firing a pistol at him; they were therefore suppressed by Pius V. 1571.

\* The Bishop Mandari ceded to them the church of San Donato a Torri; but as it proved inconvenient to the Florentine companies of tradesmen, they were invited near the city, where they came in 1256 and built the church and convent of St. Catherine d'Ognissanti: an exemption was granted them from all imposts, as well as to all the foreign artisans who established themselves at Florence.

† The Florentines possessed superiorly to all other people the art of dressing cloths, of *carding wool, combing, cleansing, cutting small, folding*: but above all they distinguished themselves in the dye. The laws deserve to be read, by which this art was regulated, and the scrupulous care taken to preserve the perfection of it. Pognini Dec. tom. 2. sez. 4. cap. 8. One of the most important branches of the trade was the dye. The dyers formed a body of trade, dependant,

few superfine cloths in Europe, which had not passed through the hands of the Florentines. These refinements, which foreigners know not how to imitate, and which made the same cloths so much the more beautiful, invited all purchasers to Florence: thence it was, that the city, unable to satisfy the demands, imported a great quantity of coarse cloths from the countries where they were manufactured, as from Brabant, England; or ordered them to be manufactured there for their account, giving them afterwards that perfection in the dye, shearing, and other arts, which foreign purchasers desired. This resale brought them immense gain, and continued to enrich the Florentines, until foreigners learnt the same refinements of the art. England was the first to put a stop to the excessive commerce in Florentine cloths. Henry VII. prohibited the export from that country of *raw unshorn* cloths\*, and the liberty of having it made there was only rarely obtained, as, for instance, by Lorenzo and Julian de Medicis†. Neither Tuscany nor Italy could supply the abundance, or the quality of wools to satisfy the quantity and perfection of Florentine cloths. They were imported from foreign countries. Portugal and Spain gave the best

however, upon that of wool, to whom they were to give bail for three hundred florins. In case of transgression, they were judged by the skilful elect, called *officers of the spots or blemishes*. If the dyers made use of false colours, they were publicly made known as impostors, and deprived of the exercise of the trade. In all the shops which belonged to the trade of wool, every game was prohibited except chess. For mutual convenience the manufacturers of the various branches of this trade united in the same places, called *convents*: four of these convents were situated in various streets, which may be seen by those who have curiosity, in the place quoted.

\* Cary's History of the Commerce of Great Britain.

† Rhymer Atti Pubb. d'Inghilterra, tom. 1. p. 3.

wools, which are considered as such even in these days, and are used in the manufacture of the finest cloths\*. The wool of England, of France, of Majorca, and Barbary, furnished materials for the cloths of a second quality, and the more ordinary cloths were made with the Italian wools†.

This immense commerce which the Florentines carried on in the woollen manufacture was supported upon a very unstable basis; viz., the produce of foreign countries. As soon as the latter were enabled to learn the secrets of the art, which was not difficult to arrive at, they necessarily worked for themselves. The avidity of gain, as we have observed, had been the cause of various manufactories of cloth being established in England and Flanders on account of the Florentines: these were so many schools for foreigners, as were also the great magazines of wool kept by the Florentines in Brabant, and other cities of Flanders, with the fairs they held there, it being too easy for any one of their servants who were either not very foresighted, disgusted, or greedy of making his fortune at the expense of his native country, to teach the Florentine art to those people. The Flemings were the first to profit from it and gain a large share of this commerce: the English followed them. Even in equal circumstances, as these nations possessed the materials of the art in their own

\* They are employed also by the English at present for the same purpose; such wools are called by the Florentines, *wools of St. Matthew*, and *wools of Garbo*.

† Such cloths were called coarse cloths, (*bigelli pignolati*, *villaneschi*, &c. Since the year 1284, we perceive that the Florentines provided themselves with wool in England, (Lett. of Simone Gher. V. Dec. tom. 2. p. 94.) In 1491, the English, in giving the Florentines the privilege of the export of the wools, wished to have the condition of transporting it themselves, and the exception of selling six hundred sacks to the Venetians.

country, the Florentines would not have been able to sustain the concurrence; but when the export of wool from thence was prohibited, this commerce of the Florentines fell into the most ruinous decay\*. The loss was irreparable, because it was impossible to make it good either by Tuscan wool, or that of any other part of Italy. Tuscany possesses, certainly, local causes which admit not of her feeding sheep in abundance†: but Italy, which formerly, from the testimony of ancient writers, has produced excellent wool‡, which abounds in excellent pastures, and is situated in the best of climates, with a middle temperature between the heat of Spain, and the cold of England and Holland, (countries producing good wool,) appears to be qualified cope with them, if sufficient care were taken of this most useful animal§. The decay of the woollen manufacture began in the fifteenth century, but was not immediately felt, on account of the Florentine commerce having increased in other branches, and from the manufacture of silk, the luxury in which had greatly increased, as we shall now see.

\* The Florentines were permitted, however, to carry wool out of England, down to the reign of Queen Elizabeth by whom it was prohibited.

† The greater part of Tuscany is full of little hills, where oil, wine, and grain, are admirably cultivated, and is therefore scanty in pasture necessary to feed cattle: one of our best sheep gives only three or four pounds of ordinary wool, whilst those of England, Spain, and Holland produce eight or nine of excellent wool.

‡ Pliny and Columella speak of the wools of Italy as of the best. Plin. lib. 8. cap. 48. “Lana autem laudatissima apula, et quæ in Italia Græci pecoris appellatur, alibi Italica, tertium locum Milesiæ oves occupant.” Strabo praises that of Modena.

§ The Tarentine sheep were celebrated for their very fine wool, to preserve which, they used to keep them covered, and were called *oves tectæ*. Colum. lib. 7. cap. 4. Plin. lib. 8. cap. 47.

## OF THE COMMERCE IN SILK.

The silken garments were little worn in Rome, not only in the times of the frugal republic, but even in those of luxuriant Roman grandeur. The harsh military education, probably, at first disdained this Asiatic effeminacy; but in the times of Cæsar they began to be introduced. The wonderful worm, which produces silk, being unknown to Italy, its operations were confined to China, to India and Persia, and were scantily transported to Europe. It was sold in those times by bartering its weight for the weight of gold\*. Another kind of more imperfect silk was then in use; many of those worms, vulgarly called grubs (*bruci*) and particularly those of the oak and the ash, a bad imitation of the Indian worm, form an imperfect ball or cod, from which a down is extracted, which Panphilas of Coos was the first to teach the texture of in that island†. The garments formed of it were transparent, and as long as female decency was preserved amongst the Romans, this drapery was only the dress of the women who wished to make those beauties visible, of which they made a traffic, and which the taste of the dissolute Horace preferred to others, exactly because the merchandise was more exposed to the eye of the purchaser‡. When licentiousness of manners afterwards increased, even the noble matrons did not disdain this transparent clothing§. Another production, too,

\* *Libra Serici, libra aurei. Vapis. Vit. Aurel.*

† *Plin. lib. 6. c. 20.*

‡ “*Cois tibi pene videre est.*” *Horat. Sat. Varrone* calls those dresses *vitreas togas*. *Publio Siro ventum textilem et nebulam linem æquum est induere nuptam vertum textilem? palam præstare nudam in nebula linea?*”

§ They are, therefore, called *translucida matronæ*.

had been known from remote times, which holds a medium between silk and wool, viz., the down produced by the marine fin, a little animal which has been called the marine silk-worm\*. The art of working the down drawn from this insect, which was forgotten in the lower ages, has been renewed in our days in Sicily†. The empire of the west, as the nearest to the silk countries, began earlier to adopt the use of it, which continued to increase to an extent, that an immense sum of gold was annually exported from Constantinople, and the other Greek provinces into Persia and the Indies. The evil increasing to a degree, demanded a remedy. It had already been learnt in what manner nature produces this wonderful substance : but the silk-worm existed not in Greece, although the tree fitted to afford it food was to be found there. The eastern nations, whose gains continually increased, employed the most scrupulous caution to prevent the seed generating these little animals from being exported beyond their confines. The sagacity, however, displayed by two Persian friars, finally found means to fill two hollow sticks with these seeds, which being transported to Constantinople with the act of giving them birth and bringing them up, of developing the silk from the ball, and of weaving it, the trade in silk became established in that city, in the sixth century, in the times of Justinian, and

\* Procop. de Edif. lib. 3.

† In the Florentine merchandise, however, of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, we find the wool of fish mentioned. See Uzzano. The works of this kind were regarded as rarities fifty years ago. A pair of gloves or stockings, made of it, were presented as a valuable curiosity to the Pontiff Benedict XIV. A kind of silk is wrought from the juice of vegetables too. Amongst the Otaheitans, there is a kind of tree from which a fluid is pressed, which is extended upon the surface of a table, where it is beaten and thinned ; when taken up again, it forms a thin linen like silk.



thence scattered through the islands of the Archipelago. Although the change of climate did not prevent the birth, and the developement of these delicate seeds, it weakened their fecundity, and like exotic plants a greater care, as well as an attention, useless in their native country, became necessary to rear them. Instead of various generations in the same year, one only could be obtained, and instead of leaving the seeds in their natural liberty upon those trees where they were made, fed and displayed their productions\*, it was necessary to give them birth by artificial heat, and preserve them in houses from the effects of our too rigid season of spring.

Ruggieri II., Count of Sicily, brought this art into Italy from the islands of the Archipelago. This restless prince, whose life was one perpetual agitation, in the expedition against those islands†, made an unexpected conquest far greater than the immense booty gained by his armies; amongst a numerous host of Greek prisoners were many workers of the silk, who established this important manufacture at Palermo. It prospered rapidly, and twenty-one years afterwards, was worked with such dexterity as to become the admiration of one of the historians of that island. The various kinds of those draperies, their beautiful colours, the gold, silver, and pearls interwoven with them, the paintings with which they were adorned, are proofs

\* Virgil was imperfectly acquainted with this part of natural history:

*Velleraque ut foliis depectant tenuia seres.*

† This event took place in the year 1147. The islands and cities sacked were Corfu, Cephalonia, Corinth, Thebes, Athens, Negroponte, and other places; Ruggieri was not personally in this expedition. From this fountain the discovery of silk was brought to Italy; but the Arabs communicated it before to the Spaniards, and the cities of Almeria and Lisbon boasted of their works in silk.

of the refinement of workmanship, and the luxury to which that manufacture had arrived\*.

From Sicily it was brought into Tuscany and Lombardy, but the period is not precisely known: it existed, however, certainly in Florence at the beginning of the thirteenth century†. Although it was introduced into that city later, it was still brought to greater perfection by the industrious Florentines than by other countries, and the same precautions were introduced into the regulations concerning it, as in that of the art of wool‡. The silk produced in Tuscany was but scanty; the cultivation of the mulberry, however, and the production of the silk

\* We will detail, at length, the passage of Falcando in the Sicilian history, because it gives us an idea of the kind of stuffs which were then worked: "*Nec vero illas palatio adhærentes officinas præterire convenit, ubi in fila variis distincta coloribus, serum vellera tenuantur et sibi invicem multiplici texendi genere coaptantur. Hinc vidæas Amita, dimita, et trimita minori prætio sumptuque perfici; hinc examita uberioris materiæ copia condensari,*" &c., &c. Thus wrote Falcando in 1169, twenty-four years after the introduction of this art. For manufacturers already expert, the time was sufficient to manufacture the stuffs of this trade: nor has Muratori right to think that the art of silk was introduced into Italy before that time, since all the prior works of sacred garments, &c., might have been formed of stuffs brought from Greece, although in those passages quoted by him, silk is spoken of; which does not appear.—Murat. Diss. 25.

† Ricordano Malaspina makes mention of the silk trade in 1265. Since 1225 the regulations had been prescribed for it. (Dec. tom. 2. sez. 5. c. 1.) but it can be shown, that even at the beginning of the same century, not only this work existed, but the manufacturers already formed a body of trade. What Tegrinio, the writer of the Life of Castruccio, asserts, is consequently that the art or trade existed at Lucca before Florence, and that when Uguccone della Faggiola sacked Lucca, in 1315, many Lucchese manufacturers saved themselves in Florence, and introduced the art.

‡ Dec. tom. 2. sez. 5. c. 1. The shops were united in proper streets, and were called convents, as those of the trade of wool.

continued constantly increasing. During the whole of the fifteenth century, foreign silks were used for the most part, and particularly those of the East\*. But although this industry was very early introduced amongst the Florentines (as we have observed), either the luxury of silk was not so much extended, or that industrious people refined the art later, the Florentine commerce, in this branch, advanced but slowly until the fifteenth century, when it arrived at the summit of its splendour and riches. Before those times the draperies and stuffs, woven in gold and silver, were worked with the threads of those metals, which were transported from Colonia, or from Cyprus. Gino Capponi introduced the art of wiredrawing gold into his native country, and the manufacture of the richest and most precious drapery soon increased to an extent that it was extended throughout Europe†. The Florentine workmen soon became the first of Europe, both in wire-drawing gold in simple drapery, in the woven gold and silver, and we find them celebrated as such by their historians and poets‡. This is the art, which, amidst the decay of Florentine commerce, has more than any other maintained itself down to our days. If the trade of silk has been extended in many provinces of Europe, and particularly in France, where probably the Florentines carried it, the use of it has almost increased in the same proportion; so that almost the same number of shops, in this trade, are reckoned, at present, as in the flourishing days of Florentine commerce. They have been surpassed by the French in the stuffs worked in

\* See Dec., where is the detail, and the names of this silk.

† Cron. di. Rened. Dei. of Gio. d' Uzzano.

‡ Ariosto acknowledges them as such,

Ma n' si bella seta, o si fin oro.

Mai Fiorentini industri tesser ferro.—*ORLAND. FUR. cant. 11, ott. 75.*

gold and silver, but have maintained the concurrence with all other people in simple silks. It is uncertain whether this extensive use of silk will long continue. The industrious skill of Arkwright the Scotchman, who by so greatly abbreviating the labour of manufacturing cotton, has taught the method of reducing the finest productions to a moderate price, is at this moment much diminishing the use of silk, and threatening its decay.

#### OF THE TRADE OF EXCHANGE, THE PHYSICIANS AND APOTHECARIES, FURRIERS, &c.

The wool and the silk business (*Arte*) were, indeed, the principal support of the Florentine opulence, but many others conspired to increase it. That of the exchange was not less profitable than the other two; for if the ingenious contrivance of transporting immense riches at one moment, by a stroke of the pen from one country to another, however distant, be not an invention of the Florentines, they were, however, amongst the first to make use of it, and it arose with the other two\*. The bankers (*Cambisti*) formed, from that time, if not earlier, a body of trade. The delicacy, necessary in this branch of commerce, had demanded the vigilance of government, and its exercise was regulated by wise ancient statutes†. The bankers, or money-changers, were obliged to undergo a kind of examination, to be matriculated like the brokers; and the old and new markets

\* In the frequently quoted treaty of peace with the Siennese, the consuls of the trade of exchange are mentioned an. 1204. Some think the letters of exchange invented by the Jews to defend themselves from the depredations and sacking to which they were often exposed, thus transporting their capitals in an instant, where they thought them most secure.

† The most ancient that are found are of 1299.

( *Mercati vecchio nuovo* ) were the places assigned to them. The bankers sat in their shops before a table or desk ( *tavoletto* ) covered with carpet, upon which were a bag of money and a book\*. They could not exercise this business out of their shops. As the various branches of commerce lend each other the hand, and are mutually serviceable to each other, so the increase and extent of the two principal trades augmented also this. The money which those two collected for the Florentines, in the various places of Europe, facilitated the means of it. For a time they were the principal bankers of Europe, and in all places were to be found Florentine bankers, or banks dependant upon them. The firm alone of Jacob and Caroccio Alberti, in 1348, maintained houses of commerce in Avignon, Bruges, Brussels, Paris, Sienna, Perugia, Rome, Naples, Barletta, and Venice. We learn from a letter, written by Pope Gregory IX, that since the year 1233, the Tuscan merchants remitted money to him from various parts of Europe. When the pontifical see was afterwards transferred to Avignon, the Florentines, who had been frequently the lessees of the revenues of the patrimony of the church, were also its bankers. Of the activity of this commerce, carried on by the Florentines, let one example be sufficient, that every week 7,000 of their ducats circulated in Venice alone, which make 392,000 the year†.

Another trade or branch of business too, most honourable in itself, and useful to human society, was exercised by the Florentines, viz., that of loan-giving; which, by bringing into commerce a great quantity of money which timid economy would otherwise leave stagnant in the

\* They are called by writers shops of carpet.

† Mar. Sanudo. Mur. tom. 2. p. 960.

chests, imparts by circulation new life to agriculture and trade. Nor can we blame it but for the abuse which has covered this branch with opprobrium as well in the ancient times of the Romans as in the lower ages, by converting the name of lender into that of sordid usurer. The Florentines, who carried on this trade throughout Europe, have not escaped the accusation, since, amongst so great a number of persons, who carried it on honestly, there will necessarily be some who abuse it\*. The bad faith usual in those times can alone excuse the odious precautions frequently taken by the Florentine usurers. In furnishing large sums to Aldobrandini d'Este, they not only demanded all his allodial estates to be given in pledge, but the person even of the brother Azzo VII†. Philip Duke of Burgundy gave in pledge to the house of Salviati, the so called Blue Bottle (*Fioralisio*) of Burgundy, or a relict, where a piece of the wood of the holy cross, with other remains, was adorned and covered with a rich number of precious gems and pearls‡. The house of Salimbeni alone, in the year

\* The Italian merchants beyond the mountains were called Lombards; and both in London and Paris there was a street of the Lombards; the Italian lenders were discredited and were often called Lombard dogs (*Cani Lombardi*). Mur. Diss. 16. Ant. Ital. et Decam. del Bocc. *Giorno I. Nov. 2.* where he describes the customs of his times.

† Mur. Ann. d' Ital. Ann. 1214.

‡ The following is the description of this piece of costly jewellery, as taken from original documents: "A lily or blue bottle, vulgarly called, the rich blue bottle of Burgundy, (*il ricco Fioralisio di Borgogna*), with a crown above gilded to the ball, which is in the place below the said lily, which ball with the foot, or until the said foot of the lily, is of gilded silver, with sculpture of a steel, striking sparks of fire above the said ball, and which lily or blue bottle is of the weight of eighteen pounds, or thereabouts, Florentine weight, with reliques, pearls, precious stones, and other things inscribed between

1260, lent the Siennese 20,000 florins. Edward III., King of England, and father of the celebrated Black Prince, conqueror in the famous battles of Crecy and Poitiers, which ruined the French power, was supported in all these expensive enterprises by the banking-house of Peruzzi, who lent him a sum, which, reduced to the value of money in our times, amounts to six millions of sequins (3,000,000 pounds sterling:) conquerors, however, rarely grow rich, and still more rarely maintain their faith\*; the English sovereign never restored this sum, and the Peruzzi, who formed one of the greatest commercial houses of Florence, were obliged to fail, a misfortune which from wide connexion, was felt by a vast number of Florentine merchants. The same bank of Peruzzi, in the year 1321, gave 191,000 florins in gold in loan to the knights of Jerusalem†; and another loan had been made to the same order, of 133,000, by the bank of Bardi.

in the said lily, or blue bottle, and inserted, which are the following: that is, in the mouth above the said lily, there is a crucifix of wood or of black stone (probably of ivory,) adorned in the right mouth of the said lily, with a little cross of wood of our Lord Yhū Xpō: in the left mouth of the said lily, there is a splinter of wood, which is said to be of the cross of our Lord, and in the knot of the said lily, there is cloth of a dark colour, which is said to be of the garment of the glorious Virgin Mary; and, in the mouth of the said lily, under the said knot, there is a nail, which is said to be one of those with which our Yhū Xpō was crucified; forty precious stones of divers qualities; thirty-six other stones called zapphirs, of different qualities; fifty-five little roses of gold with four pearls in each of them, and a stone of sharp diamond, and a stone called ruby, and in the crown which is above the said lily, there are four pearls in the form of pears, with acute diamond; thirty-eight pearls, fixed in different parts of the said crown, and of different qualities."

\* Villani, lib. 12. c. 54. 56.

† Lami Deliciæ Erudit. an. 1740.

It would lead us too far were we to mention the enormous sums which private Florentine merchants gave in loan to monarchs. The family of the Medicis is sufficiently celebrated on this account, and entered even into public treaties with sovereigns\*. In a city of most extensive commerce, where money taken in loan can produce to the receiver extraordinary profits, where the risk may be great, justice allows a greater interest than what is commonly known with us. The ten, twelve, and even twenty per cent. were considered as tolerable, and the community of Florence took money in the fourteenth century at twelve, fifteen, and twenty per cent†; but we find greedy usury carrying it as far as thirty and forty; and if the Florentine community invited Jews to Florence, and conceded to them the power of lending, upon condition of not taking a greater interest than twenty, she endeavoured only thereby to check the strange usury carried on in those times. A people naturally industrious, whose activity had been put in motion by lucre, and who were scattered throughout Europe for the principal objects of commerce we have mentioned, knew how to draw profit from the particular and momentary circumstances, in order to gain upon a thousand little objects. Sometimes they became the

\* We read in the patent letters, sent by the King of France to Martigny, his ambassador to King Edward of England, "that for the agreement entered into the company of Medici will be bound.—Rhymer, lib. 5. p. 3.

† The exorbitant interest is not so much a sign of the avidity of the lenders, as of the greatness and rapidity of commerce, and of the extraordinary gains derived. It is of very little importance to a merchant to pay by week or month a very heavy interest, if he can make an exorbitant gain. Robertson, in his researches upon the commerce of the East Indies, infers from the very heavy interest of money in Venice, the extraordinary profits of that republic.



collectors of the revenues of sovereigns ; at others they advanced large sums to great landholders, purchasing by anticipation the revenues of their estates at a moderate price, and selling them again at a dearer one, with many other gains of a like nature. The reputation which their golden florin and their mint acquired, paved to them the road of becoming the lessees and directors of various mints in Europe\*.

Other branches of commerce tended to enrich the Florentines, although indirectly, since they occupied themselves with objects, which neither the soil of Tuscany nor the hands of their artisans produced, but which were drawn from foreign countries, and which the industry they employed enabled them to sell again at a dear rate, in the places where they kept a commercial correspondence, after having furnished their own country with them. These merchants were particularly the furriers, (*pellicciai*), and the druggists (*droghieri*).

There was a time, as we have observed, in which Italy clothed herself in skins, but even when this fashion became out of use, its luxury in some measure remained. The lining of garments, and the borders of fur, were common amongst the nobility. The outward contours of the garment were adorned with precious stripes of the skins of ermine, sables, and other noble skins ; a fashion which has been continued even to our own days, with many of those persons, who, forming a corporation, choose to preserve ancient fashions ; such as the clergy, for example, and other secular dignities. The great com-

\* One Frescobaldi was director of that of London. The Gherardini coins of Naples were so called from Gherardo Gianni, and there were other coins in foreign countries, which took their name from their citizens.

merce the Florentines carried on in this article, becomes evident by observing, that the furriers formed one of the seven greater corporations of trade or arts. That of the physicians and apothecaries, however, was not alone confined to the sale of medicinal drugs. The same shops contained both the materials which have the reputation of restoring health, and those which destroy it, viz., the eastern spices. The number of these shops, which existed in Florence, their riches, as we learn from the census (*catusto*) of 1427\*, the vast quantities of drugs they contained as mentioned in the accounts of Balducca and Uzzano, clearly prove to us that these articles were not intended for Tuscany alone, but for foreign countries.

The Florentines, however, were not confined to the mere commerce in their own manufactures, but had directed their attention also to that of the East, in which they had powerful rivals in the Venetians, the Genoese, and their own neighbours, the Pisans. The Florentine republic, situated within land, without marine, was reduced to the necessity, for a long time, of carrying on their commerce in the vessels of other nations, and of receiving whatever law the powers of the Mediterranean were pleased to impose upon them. Making amends, nevertheless, by their industry for their want of means, they succeeded in gaining no small part of the commerce of the East Indies. The Florentines, at the beginning, being excluded from the side of Egypt by the Venetians, who made a kind of monopoly thereof, were exposed to long and difficult journeys, by traversing Asia, and penetrating even so far as China†. In the various markets

\* Pagn. Dec.

† The following is the description of the land journey of the Florentines from the Black Sea to China, as it is found in the documents

of Armenia, of Persia, and of other provinces, they disposed of those wares, which good information had taught them to take there, and they brought others very precious away with them. They purchased in some of those markets the spices which were carried thither by the Asiatic merchants, who, probably in order not to receive the law of price, which it pleased the Venetians to impose upon them, transported with great labour within land productions of very little value, because they were too abundant in Ceylon, in the Molaccas, and elsewhere; and, in order to render which more rare, and consequently more costly, European avidity has sometimes placed a restraint upon the fecundity of nature, by destroying their growing seeds. Besides the spices, many sorts of which are mentioned, they provided themselves with pearls and precious stones; and not less than twenty-two kinds of skins are mentioned in the catalogues of this merchandise\*. Thither they carried their cloths, with all those productions of Europe, which foresight and experience had instructed them to take. They had to contend with many obstacles. The jealous Pisans, at times, openly shut up their port against them, by means of which they alone could carry on their mari-

of Balducci. It began from the mouth of the Tanais, or Don, a port which corresponds with Azof, whence it passed on to Astracan, thence to Saracanco, near the Volga, through Organci, not far distant from the Caspian, and through many other places, the names of which are no longer recognised, they arrived at Gambaluc, or Gamallecco, the chief city, or capital, of China, viz., Pekin. The description quoted may be consulted, where singular circumstances are found detailed.

\* We find therein raw silk, stuffs, rice, rhubarb, incense, wax, brazil-wood, amber, dates, salt fish, sugar, opium, wines, &c. Some of these were not brought from Asia, but from the islands of the Archipelago.

time commerce, at others laid a thousand fetters in their way by intolerable duties. The Florentines, obliged thereto by these obstacles, made a treaty with the Siennese in the year 1356, and availed themselves of their port of Talamone, which the Pisans tried to prevent by every endeavour, even by exciting the Genoese against them, who, rivals of the Florentines, too, in maritime commerce, attempted to shut up the port of Talamone\*.

The Florentines hereupon took Provençal and Neapolitan galleys into their pay, with which they kept the port free. The Pisans, perceiving their error, which deprived them of the extraordinary profit they derived from the duties upon Florentine merchandise, offered to restore them the privileges they had taken away, to which the former easily consented, (1369,) as the transport of their goods to Talamone could only be effected by a long and troublesome road. Such concessions, however, were always precarious; an animosity of the Pisans, a caprice, the influence of any sovereign, an enemy to the Florentines, could shut up that port at an instant, and cause them immense losses. We see them, therefore, involved in the greatest difficulties, when, in the year 1401, their enemy, the Duke of Milan, Visconti, celebrated by the name of the Count of Virtue, occupied Sienna, Genoa, and Pisa. The only road, and a most expensive one, which could be opened to their merchandise, was that of Bologna, which was in the hands of Bentivoglio; and they were, for some time, in alarm, that his power would also effect the shutting up of this too. Upon the death of a man so dangerous to the Florentines, which happened in the following year,

\* *Amm. Ist. Fior. lib. 11.*

they perceived the danger to which their commerce was exposed by not possessing a maritime port; and, making every effort against Pisa, they became masters of it in the year 1406.

They now established a marine. Their first admiral was Andrew Gargioli, a Florentine citizen. They soon obtained (anno 1421) the port of Leghorn from the Genoese by means of 100,000 florins in gold. It has appeared strange to many, that the crafty Genoese should have sold to an industrious people that harbour, which has afterwards become the rival of Genoa; but they easily foresaw they could not keep it against a powerful republic, which, by the acquisition of Pisa, surrounded it on every side, and which already possessed another convenient port in Porto Pisano, the destruction of which they (the Genoese) could not foresee. In spite of these ports, however, the Florentine marine was never formidable; and the republic appears to have limited herself to a number of armed vessels sufficient and adapted to protect her commerce. It is true, however, that the epoch of the greater opulence of the Florentine commerce begins after the occupation of Pisa,—when the Florentines, free from every embarrassment, made excellent regulations. Six consuls of marine were created, four of the greater trades, and two of the lesser, three of whom were afterwards established in Pisa\*. Almost every thing appertaining to commerce was intrusted to them; to forbid or permit the introduction of foreign merchandise; to charge it with, or to exonerate it from duties; and particularly to watch over the marine, the coasts, the ports, and propose treaties of

\* The three Florentines were afterwards suppressed, and their commissions annexed to the magistracy of faction.

commerce with foreign powers. Great, however, as might be the industry they employed in traffic with Indian merchandise, nevertheless, any sensible man will easily comprehend, that the quantity of such merchandise could not be very great, as they were obliged to bring them, for the greatest part, by land by a very circuitous road, and employ a very considerable time\*. They endeavoured, therefore, frequently to be admitted to the commerce of Alexandria, which was the great emporium of Indian produce.

Taddeo Cenni, who was best versed in this branch of traffic from having been occupied therein for a considerable time in Venice, laid down the project, and the plan for carrying it into execution †. Two ambassadors, viz., Charles Federighi and Felix Brancacci, were sent, in the year 1422, with rich presents to the Soldan of Egypt, and obtained the same privileges as the Venetians enjoyed ‡. It was very difficult, however, for the

\* From Asof they employed eight or ten months; computing the time of the stay and return, we shall have about two years. To this time we must add that employed from Asof to Pisa, or to Leghorn, doubling it for the going and return; and, if we add the necessary delays in the various ports, and the difficulty of navigation in those times, in which this art was little known, we shall see that not less than three years could be employed in that journey; whilst the Venetians, carrying on commerce by means of Egypt, obtained the produce of the Indies with much greater facility. It was said, therefore, that the spices transported across Asia had a better flavour (Cron di Ben Dei) than those brought into Egypt by the less delay upon the sea. This report, perhaps, was an artifice of the Florentines; but, probably, it was also true; since, in our days, it is commonly believed, that the tea transported by land from China to Petersburg, has a better flavour than that brought by the English and Dutch by the Cape of Good Hope.

† Pagn. Dec.

‡ The instructions given by the Florentine republic to the two

Florentines to maintain the concurrence in that commerce with a nation, which had so long established it; which was well acquainted with all the branches of it; and which, teeming with riches and mistress of the seas, was enabled at her pleasure, and under any pretexts, either to sink or confiscate the vessels carrying that merchandise; with a nation, too, which at that time imposed laws even upon the soldan himself. This commerce, therefore, never prospered\*; and the Florentines had only to devote greater attention to what they carried on in the Archipelago and in the Black Sea. The Greek emperors, and particularly John Palæologos, remembering the attentions they had experienced in Florence, ceded to them ample privileges†. But the Genoese, as we have already observed, were the most powerful in these seas. Their predominant influence continued until the fall of the Greek empire, nor was the aid given so imprudently to Mahomet, in order to accelerate the ruin of it sufficient to sustain them‡.

ambassadors mentioned, may be read in the Authentic Documents of the Book of the Dee. The translation of the concession made by the soldan, by which the Florentines obtained a consul, church, magazine, baths, own judges, in Alexandria; and that the course of the florin was equal to that of Venice. In the same book, the documents are found upon the embassy sent to the same soldan by Lewis Stufa, and the concessions.

\* See the History of Guicciardini, lib. 6, who speaks of the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth.

† The consul of Romania, with the title of *Enrino*, or *Balia*, or *Baila*, resided first in Constantinople, and afterwards in Pera, possessed a church and prison, and therefore jurisdiction over the Florentines, and three houses near the church, where they enjoyed protection from any crime, except an attempt upon the sovereign, *Pagn Dec.*

‡ The Genoese lost all their establishment. In the Chronicle of Ben. Dei, often quoted, these six cities are mentioned: 1, Pera;

This event changed the face of the western provinces of Asia, and gave rise to innovations even in commerce. The Venetian republic found herself in great danger. Instead of the weak Greek empire, despised by her, and sometimes invaded, we see a power arise capable of destroying her\*, and which would probably have happened, had not vicissitudes taken place in the Ottoman empire, which empire, like the explosion of a volcano, advanced for a time so rapidly, as to threaten the whole of Italy with servitude, but soon began to fall into a languid debasement. The Florentines, probably, were the only power which maintained itself in the face of this storm. Being at that time the natural enemies of the Venetians, they were graciously received by the great conqueror of the Greek empire; whom they sought to win over to them by presents, by artifices, and by every possible good office†. He treated them always with great distinction, and as a mark of his confidence towards them, when the Florentine ships arrived in Constantinople, in the year 1460, he went on board, with the suite of an only servant; held a long discourse upon the

2, Foglie; 3, Metellino; 4, Famagosta; 5, Scios; 6, Caffa. The population of this latter is made to amount in that time to 70,000 individuals, nearly as at our time.

\* A few years before the inroads of the Turks had penetrated into Friuli.

† In the curious Chronicle of Ben. Dei, are found interesting accounts, relative to this time and these events. He relates, that being in Scios, in 1466, he intercepted letters of the Venetians, wherein many wrongs were said of Mahomet and the Florentines, and that he caused to arrive at the hands of the former. He also relates a singular dialogue he held with that sovereign, whose patience and good disposition towards the Florentines we must admire, at the follies which this man told him, and which he bore to listen to.



affairs of Italy with the Florentine consul, and with the captain and master of the vessel; conceded to them many privileges, and amongst others, that of having a church, and living as they pleased; and in the conquests he made in the Levant, the merchandise and the persons of the Florentines remained always untouched\*. It happened otherwise with other commercial nations: the Venetians, as we have seen, were threatened with final destruction; the Genoese were despoiled of their finest establishments in the channel and in the Black Sea†, whilst the Florentines were always humanely treated‡, and honoured with an embassy; and presents were made to Lorenzo and Bernardetto de Medicis. The Florentines never lost hope of gaining the oriental commerce, by the easy road of Egypt; the repeated instances made, particularly by Lorenzo de Medicis, to that

\* Notwithstanding the confusion in which the Chronicle of Dei is written, it is inferred, that when Mahomet II. took Negroponte, (ann. 1471,) a place, at that time, of very great commerce, there were fifty firms, or companies of Florentine merchants, and *large places* of the value of 400,000 florins, three great galleys, 8,000 cloths and stuffs of silk and gold, and seven hundred Florentines, and that all was saved.

† The same Dei relates, that after the taking of Constantinople, Mahomet occupied Pera, inhabited by the Genoese in particular, robbed all the churches, except S. Francis, of the Genoese, ordered the convent of S. Chiara to be done away with, and gave the females of the nunneries to the soldiers, saying that it was contrary to the command of God, to remain steril and not multiply.

‡ The ambassador, whom Dei mentions Mahomet to have sent to Florence, in 1479, had, perhaps, no public character, as he is not mentioned by historians. This man, however, who is cotemporary, asserts, that he brought presents to Lorenzo and Bernardetto de Medicis, and demanded from the government of Florence, masters in engraving, sculpture in bronze, &c., and that the ambassadors were presented to the government by a youth of the house of Martelli.

Soldan, the fame of this extraordinary man, (Lorenzo,) which had penetrated into the most distant countries, gave, at least, to him and his republic, a high distinction in the solemn embassy sent by the same Soldan to Lorenzo, with presents of the productions of Asia and Africa, and particularly of the most extraordinary and rarest animals of Egypt.

From what we have hitherto noted, it is easy to see that the restless industry of the Florentines hardly left any branch of commerce of any note, in the countries then known, unattended to, and neglected nothing from which they could derive advantage\*. Although, however, these branches of commerce we have hitherto touched upon, have undergone various vicissitudes, the greatest epoch of Florentine opulence appears to have fallen in the fifteenth century, when the trade in silk was so greatly increased and extended. There were not less than two hundred and seventy-two cloth manufactories at that time in Florence†, which manufactured about 100,000 pieces of cloth, (without reckoning those manufactured for Florentine account in foreign countries,) which gave bread to more than 30,000 persons; eighty-three silk

\* In the little work of Uzzano we have mentioned, a catalogue is found of various goods, with the tax they paid on their entry, some of which deserve to be mentioned, as they give us an idea of the usages of those times. We find therein ostrich pens, entrails of white oxen, silvered over, to make garlands, counterpanes of Tenedado, embroidered in gold, caps of wool of fish, counterfeit pearls, peacocks' quills, apple wine, blackberry wine, sorb apples, thighs of frogs, &c.

† John Villani says, that in his times, about the year 1340, there were two hundred cloth-shops, which manufactured about 80,000 pieces of cloth, of the value of 1,200,000 golden florins, of which more than a third remained in Florence, not reckoning the gain made by the woolstaplers, and that 30,000 persons lived by this labour.

manufactories and magnificent stuffs in gold; seventy-two bankers, or tables of exchangers; sixty-six shops of apothecaries and druggists; thirty of goldbeaters; forty-four of goldsmiths, silversmiths, and jewellers; and the coin circulating in Florence, and giving animation to her trade, amounted to 2,000,000 of golden florins\*. Many other ingenious artisans are mentioned, and, amongst others, the workers in wax figures as truly wonderful. As gold thus flowed into Florence from so many parts, and so many objects, we shall easily understand how she became one of the greatest cities in Europe. She contended with Venice, and yielded, probably, to her alone.

Upon such foundations was a little city of Tuscany enabled to undertake those vast expenses, memorials of which are to be found in the public buildings, and still more in the histories, wherein are registered the immense sums she spent in wars. One war alone, against Visconti, called the Count of Virtue, cost her 3,500,000 florins in gold, that is, 15,000,000 of our money, in less than two years†. In the space of twenty-nine years, from 1377 to 1406, in wars alone, 11,500,000 of golden florins, or 58,000,000 of our days, were spent; immense sums were squandered in many others; seventy families alone, from the year 1430 to 1453, paid, by way of impost, 4,875,000 florins in gold‡.

\* Amm. Ist. lib. 18. Cron. di Ben. Dei.

† Christop. Land. Apology of Florence.

‡ Amm. Ist. Fior. Pagn. We must give these sums, which now might appear mediocre, the value of their own times, before America had poured so much gold and silver into Europe. The learned Robertson (History of Charles V.,) thinks, that in order to reduce the sums mentioned, before the discovery of America, to the value of our times, it would be necessary to multiply them always by five: now, perhaps, by seven.

If we add to these sums the sumptuous loans made to so many sovereigns, loans which were never paid; the presents sent to emperors, either to gain their favour, or to appease their animosity; to the companies of wanderers and plunderers, or soldiers who infested Italy; we shall perceive that the Florentine republic, small as she was in territory and population, spent sums which equalled those spent in our days by England and Holland. Boniface VIII. said to Charles of Valois, brother of the King of France, whom he had sent to Florence, upon the pretext of settling discords: *I have sent you to the fountain of gold, if you do not quench your thirst in it, it is your own fault. (Io t'ho mandato alla fonte dell' oro, se tu non ti sei cavato la sete, tuo danno.)*

Almost a century back, John Villani relates that the revenues of the community amounted to 300,000 florins in gold, and gives a minute detail of the various fountains whence they were drawn. In the century following, commerce, and consequently the sources of opulence, had greatly increased. We may, therefore, even without making other researches, infer, with all probability, that the revenues of the community must have far surpassed the sum mentioned by Villani; nevertheless, the annual ordinary expenditure was very moderate. From a provision made on the 1st of December, 1428\*, wherein all the public expenses are described, we perceive that the latter amounted to 127,366 florins in gold; hence there was always an exorbitant annual surplus in the revenues of the republic, and by remaining in peace she would soon have discharged her debts; but it happened with her, as with England in the present

\* It is detailed at large in the notes to the Life of Cosmo of Mons. Fabbroni, note 35.

days: the frequent wars deranged the public economy, and caused her to contract enormous debts. Observation shews us how many private individuals enrich themselves in wars, by dilapidating the public patrimony, whilst it is so difficult to make the administrators thereof render an exact account. We may, therefore, conjecture, with great probability, that there were many persons in the public deliberations, who blew fuel upon the wars, and calculated that the public evil would become their private good; that their fields\* would be fertilized by the general inundation. There was a time when the Florentine merchants lived very parsimoniously, without luxury, either public or private. About the middle of the thirteenth century, although the city had increased so much in riches and population, the Florentines continued the same life of simplicity, and this period is considered by her historians and poets, as the most glorious of her history †. Frugal in their tables, they were seen clothed in unadorned skins, with boots or gaiters to the feet, (*usatti in piede*), and a simple cap on the head. The greatest luxury of the women was a gown of scarlet, without other ornament than a girdle, (*scheggiale*), in the antique fashion, with a mantle lined with fur, over them. The greatest fortune or dowry was three hundred florins, which frugal times are remembered with pain by the greatest Florentine poet, in the following verses:

Firenza dentro della cerchia antica  
 Ond' ella prende ancora terza et nona  
 Vivea in pace sobria, e pudica,

\* Sperando che in passar l' onda nocente  
 Qualche sterpo s' accresca alla sua sponda.

“Hoping that, in passing the hurtful wave, some sprig may grow upon his shore.”

† Ann. Ist. lib. 2.

Non avea Catenella, non corona,  
 Non donne contigiate, non cintura,  
 Che a veder fosse piu della persona, &c.

From these verses, as well as from history, we learn that the old system of frugality was already lost in his times. It was indeed difficult to preserve it in a country where commerce collected vast riches, nor can we blame a people for making use of their riches for their pleasures, and the ornament of their country; otherwise it would have been amassing gold continually, without spending it, seeking the means without the end.

• Quo mihi fortunas si non conceditur uti?\*

It is difficult, however, to preserve ourselves in moderation; the frequent sumptuary laws, and particularly upon female ornaments, prove the continual increase of luxury; nevertheless, the merchants still lived, even in the midst of riches, far removed from the parade of ostentation. They would not have ventured to put either gold or silver upon their garments, nor make use of silver plate at their tables; and it would have been accounted as great a shame for a citizen to have made use of it, as it is now his honour†. Herein they imitated the ancient Romans; amongst whom, Cornelius

• Hor. lib. 1. epist. 5.

† Borghini della Moneta. "Frequently one sheath of forks, or spoon-case, which had been frequently made a present of by the community, for some good works: sometimes a cup of confectionary for nuptials, and when the matter was at the height, one or two cups, and a saltseller. They would not have ventured to keep other plate in the house, from fear of reproach: so that, if they had their chests full of silver coin and florins of gold, they were for the common use of trade, and the necessary articles of cupboards, candlesticks, and for water to wash the hands, and ewers were of brass, but with a very small round border of silver in the middle, and on the cover of the ewer."

Rufinus, who had been dictator, and twice consul, was expelled the senate, by the Censor Fabricius Luscinius, for having plate of ten pounds weight for his own domestic use. The Carthaginian ambassadors chose to despise the poverty of the Romans, by the sophisticated praise they made of the affection which reigned amongst them, from having seen the same silver plate in all the houses where they had dined. This fact was renewed in Florence, in 1467, in the nuptials of Nicholas Martelli, and upon the arrival of the Duke of Calabria, wherein the same plate appeared in the various banquets that were given.

Commerce was thus the most honourable profession of Florence: the dishonour which a failure, owing even to misfortunes, brought along with it; the penalty which extended through all the male branches of the bankrupt, of being no longer able to carry on commerce; the opprobrious spectacle \* to which insolvent debtors were condemned, excited on every side the Florentine caution.

We will conclude with one observation. When we consider that, for three ages, the Florentine republic has been agitated, with little intervals, by internal discords, accompanied by the death and exile of so many of her richest citizens, and that, in the midst of so many misfortunes, her commerce became, nevertheless, most flourishing, it is easy to account for the great genius she displayed in commercial intercourse; and that a more tranquil system of legislation, such as becomes a trading nation, would have conducted Florence to a summit of grandeur almost beyond our imagination.

\* The debtor was conducted in full day-time to the most populous place of Florence, the portico of the Mercato Nuovo, and there was beaten upon a black and white stone.

## CHAPTER XI.

STATE OF ITALY.—LOUIS THE MOOR CALLS CHARLES VIII. INTO ITALY.—FRENCH AMBASSADORS IN ITALY.—THE FLORENTINES REFUSE THE PASSAGE ASKED BY CHARLES.—MOVEMENT OF CHARLES.—ARRIVES AT PAVIA.—DEATH OF THE YOUNG DUKE OF MILAN.—LOUIS CAUSES HIMSELF TO BE PROCLAIMED HIS SUCCESSOR.—THE FRENCH ARMY PASSES THE APENNINES BY THE LUNIGIANA.—PETER DE MEDICIS GOES TO CHARLES.—SECOND EXPULSION OF THE MEDICIS FROM FLORENCE.—CHARLES ARRIVES AT LUCCA.—ENTERS FLORENCE.—TREATY OF AGREEMENT WITH THE FLORENTINES.—ANSWER OF PETER CAPPONI.—DEPARTURE OF CHARLES FOR ROME.—CHARLES ENTERS ROME, AND AGREES WITH THE POPE.—CONQUERS THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES.

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**I**TALY, since the decay and overthrow of the Roman empire in the west, had never been so flourishing<sup>1494.</sup> and happy as at the present moment. She was divided either into rich and powerful republics, or into principalities not subject to foreign dominion: a division, indeed, which rendered her less adapted to resist invasions, but augmented her industry and riches. Venice, Genoa, and Florence were the richest cities in Europe. The commerce was carried on, for the most part, by Italians; and although America had been discovered by Columbus since the year 1492, the productions of the latter found not, as yet, a free circulation throughout Europe. The Cape of Good Hope had not been passed. The commerce, therefore, of the East Indies, and the Levant, a commerce the most important, was carried on by the Venetians, the Genoese, the Florentines, and a



great part of the riches, which in our days, are amassed in England, Holland, Portugal, &c., were accumulated in Italy. Magnificence and luxury, the daughters of opulence, displayed themselves every where. The fine arts had already been revived, and Florence, Bologna, Venice, and Rome, produced no unworthy rivals to Apelles and Praxiteles. Sciences and letters, which generally accompany prosperity, flourished in Italy above every other country, and Florence became the seat of them. All the minor princes of Italy vied with each other in giving a courteous reception to, and protecting men of letters. The muses were frequently assembled at their courts, whilst learning and spirit occupied the leisure of princes and of courtiers, an occupation which, however, many of the modern courtiers, may call pedantry, was, at least, innocent and instructive\*. For a

\* The Asolani of Bembo, the Cortigiano of Castiglione, although they may sometimes appear tainted with pedantry, are not wanting (particularly the latter) in spirit and elegance. They represent to us exactly the manners of those little courts, and especially that of Urbino, and the custom of employing themselves frequently in literary disputes. That of Urbino is described to us also by Ariosto, who had frequented it. He speaks of it as of an asylum of the muses. *Sat.* 3.

. . . . Io era degli antichi Amici  
Del Papa, prima che virtute, o sorte  
Lo sublimasse al sommo degli ufficii.  
E prima che gli aprissero le porte  
I Fiorentini, quando il suo Giuliano  
Si riparò nella Feltresca Corte,  
Ove col formator del Cortigiano,  
Col Bembo, e gli altri sacri al Divo Apollo  
Facea l' esilio suo men duro e strano.

“ I was one of the ancient friends of the pope, before either virtue or fortune raised him to the highest of human honours : and before the Florentines opened to him the gates, when his Julian took refuge in the court of Feltri, where with the author of the Cortigiano, with Bembo, and others sacred to the god Apollo, he made his exile less harsh and strange.”

long time Italy had not been molested by invasions of foreign princes, whilst the little wars that occurred between the Italians, carried no gold out of Italy, and were soon quelled. For more than sixty years no emperor, under the pretext of going to be crowned at Rome, had sacked Italy, and as the mercenary associations of lawless plunderers were destroyed, a tranquil peace reigned throughout.

This prosperity and tranquillity were now, however, about to be disturbed by the ambitious propensity of Louis the Moor, who invited the French into Italy. His name ought to be held in eternal execration by all good Italians, since he gave rise to a contention which has never ceased. Lombardy and the kingdom of Naples began at that time to be disputed for, and distracted particularly by foreigners. The throne of Naples had frequently been contested by foreign princes, but the conqueror remained in possession thereof, and being naturalized, reigned as an Italian. Louis discovered a new source of misfortunes to Italy, and opened under his own feet the abyss, into which he fell himself, together with his house, and that of his relatives, the Arragonese.

The kings of France, of Spain, and the Austrian emperors, in taking possession reciprocally of those rich countries, preserved them as a conquest. They were thus exposed to pass, at every moment, from one to the other, and Italy, therefore, was laid open to all the evils of war. The possession of the kingdom of Naples has never enriched any of these powers; the expense of the conquest and maintenance has always exceeded the revenue, and has nevertheless made so many unhappy, and spilt so much blood.

It is certain that had it not been for the councils and the aid furnished by Louis, King Charles would never

have undertaken so dangerous an enterprise. The wisest of his counsellors opposed it\*, but youthful ardour, greediness of glory and of conquests, gave a more attentive ear to the less experienced. The intrigues and councils of Peter de Medicis and the pope, who was now become a friend of Naples, to distract him from the enterprise, were eluded, and the difficulties which were continually increasing, were overcome by the two enemies of the pope, and Peter, viz., by the Cardinal of San Piero, in Vincola, who had escaped into France, from the persecutions of the pope, and by the two young Medicis, who were relations of Peter. The former, who was afterwards Julian II., alike troublesome to Italy, as a cardinal and a pope, seeing the enterprise abandoned by increasing difficulties on every side, and particularly from the want of money, went to meet Charles, encouraged him anew with that impetuous eloquence of which he was master, by pointing out to him both the loss of decorum in face of all Europe, the diminished reputation of his power, or the charge which would be made against him of inconstancy: he then painted to him the facility of the conquest, and the readiness of the Italian cities to open their gates, and to furnish him with money†. The two Medicis, Lorenzo and John,

\* There is a difference amongst writers. Guicciardini is of this opinion: Giovio and Corio say that the enterprise was accepted by the French barons without conditions. It would be fit to listen to and quote the documents of the celebrated Comines, a follower of Charles in this expedition.—“ *L'entreprise semblaît à toutes les gens sages dangereuse, et il n'eut que lui qui la trouva bonne, et un appelé Etienne de Vers, &c. . . . ladite entreprise, dont peu de gens la louoient, car toutes les choses défailleient,*” &c. Read all that follows.—Comin. *Croniques du Roi Charles VIII.*

† Guic. Ist. lib. 1.

had been persecuted by Peter, whose frivolity, and vanity for youthful amours, or other slight cause, had occasioned a dispute between them\*. The young men had been banished into the country, but having broken their parole, went to France, and persuaded the king that the adherence of the republic to Naples, which appeared to the king one of the difficulties, was rather an adherence of Peter than of the government; that Peter had a great many enemies in it, and that as soon as the French arms appeared, the republic, which was so greatly oppressed by him, would revolt against him. Hatred and rage are sometimes ingenious and eloquent: these persons, therefore, gave a great weight to the balance.

French ambassadors in the mean time appeared to gain

\* The fact is related differently by Ammirato and by Nardi. The former says that John was the finest young man of Florence; this youth, being masked one evening, was insulted by Peter for being his competitor in love for a noble lady, and that he marked a garment of silvered cloth, with stains of ink. The young man feigned to take no notice of it, being masked; but, at another festival, being also masked, and speaking to the same lady, Peter tore the mask off his face: John, then drawing a dagger, aimed a blow at Peter, who was protected by the armour he wore under him. The festival was thrown into confusion, and Lorenzo who was present, took part also in the affray. Peter, instead of dissimulating, having notified the affair to the magistrates, pretended that the two young men should be punished with death. Warned, however, not to be cruel towards his own blood, he contented himself with banishment into the country. Amm. lib. 6. Nardi is silent upon these amours, and doubtfully mentions various causes of the banishment, and an affray at a game of football. He adds, however, that when they returned from the palace, whither they had been summoned, together with Peter, accompanied by many citizens, the latter, after having accompanied Peter home, with great friendship accompanied also the two young men to their houses, which shewed the disapprobation of the action of Peter, and the public favour towards him, which was declining.—Nardi Istor. Fior. lib. 1.

for the army the favour of the Italian princes. The minor princes were divided ; some following the fortunes of Naples, others those of France. The Siennese answered, through the medium of Bartholomew Soccino, that, being surrounded on every side by the enemies of France, Naples, Rome and Florence, they could not at present offer a word in his favour\*. The Florentine republic, and consequently Peter de Médicis, was pressed above every other. They finally demanded, as an essential point, a passage for the troops of the king, and provisions as long as they should remain in the Florentine territory. The majority in the republic were for granting it, and prudence required it; but Peter opposed it, by demonstrating, that an alliance and friendship with Naples was not to be violated, nor the stain of violators of faith to be purchased. It is true, that according to the rigour of treaty, the Florentines ought not to have given passage to the enemies of Naples; but experience shews that conditions are observed in no alliance so far as not to admit of some interpretation or modification, when the ruin of an ally is threatened, as it is the first law of every government to sacrifice all to the public safety. The Florentine republic was not in a condition to oppose the passage of the French army; her strict adherence to the treaty, without assisting the King of Naples, might have been fatal to her, and, in fact, the imprudence, rather than the constancy, evinced by Peter, brought the republic to the brink of ruin†. Nothing more was wanting than an unpardonable presumption to oppose so many respectable persons, and an equal ignorance, in order not to see the facility with which a powerful king, assisted by the riches and intrigues of Louis, would penetrate into the heart of

\* Allegretto Allegr. San. Cron.

† Guicciar. Is. lib. 1.

Italy without meeting with any obstacle on the part of the Venetians, and the evils which would arise therefrom to the republic.

Upon the refusal of the Florentines the first acts of hostility were commenced against them in France. Their ambassadors were ordered to depart, and by the advice given by the crafty Louis, not the Florentine merchants, but the agents only of Peter, were expelled from Lyons in order to make Florence perceive the difference which the king made between the republic and that citizen. Peter, on the other hand, left no means unresorted to of making the faith of Louis suspected by the King of France. Amongst others he practised one worthy only of the cowardly and the weak. Mattarone, ambassador from Charles, and Taverna from Louis, were in Florence. He caused the former to be concealed under the tapestry of his room, in order that he might listen to the discourse which the latter held in the name of his master; the tenor of which was, that he sought the ruin of the Arragonese, but that he was not so mad as to suffer the French to establish their power in Italy, against whom he would soon unite to drive them out. This fraud, without deterring Charles from the enterprise, irritated Louis only the more against Peter\*.

War being thus decided upon, the Arragonese were the first to open the campaign by sea and land. A very considerable fleet, towards the end of June, sailed from the Neapolitan ports, commanded by Don Frederic, brother of the king, and directed its course towards Genoa, endeavouring, with the Genoese outlaws, who were on board, to effect the rebellion of Genoa from the Duke of Milan. The attempts, however, made as well upon

\* Guic. Is. lib. 1. Jovi. Is. lib. 1. Oricell. de Bello It.

that city as upon other places of the coast were fruitless, for the diligence employed by Louis had prepared means of defence on every side. Porto Venere was in vain attacked: Rapallo, taken by a sudden assault of the Neapolitans, who had disembarked, was retaken by an equal impetuosity of the Genoese and French; whilst a fleet, prepared by Louis, sailing from Genoa, with other vessels of Provence attached to it, Don Frederick considered it not opportune to wait for it, and retreated to Naples without glory\*. The Neapolitan fleet entered Leghorn and Porto Pisano more than once, and had received supplies of provision and ammunition. King Charles asked the republic again, if, upon occasion demanding it, his fleet could be received in those ports, which was denied him with the usual imprudence†.

But what made the Florentines more decidedly regarded by the King of France as enemies, was the junction of a party of the troops of the republic with those under the command of Ferdinand Duke of Calabria. Whilst King Alphonso had halted at the confines of Abruzzo, for the defence of his own states and those of the church, with 100 squadrons of men of arms, and 3,000 bowmen, he sent his son Ferdinand forward into Romagna, with a considerable corps, in order to advance if affairs went on prosperously in Lombardy. Ferdinand and Peter had a meeting at San Sepolcro, where the latter, from juvenile frivolity, and won by the affable manners of that prince, paying no regard to the counsels of the more prudent citizens, ordered the troops of Benti-

\* Comines, *Chroniques de Charles VIII.* chap. 9. Guicc. Ist. lib. 1. Senarega de Rebus Genuen. *Rer. Ital. Scrip.* tom. 24.

† Guicc. Ist. lib. 1. Amm. lib. 26.

voglio, general of the Florentines, to form a junction with the Neapolitans, and through his influence, the troops of the Lords of Faenza, Forli, and Bologna; thus setting by this act the last seal upon his imprudence\*. But the progress of the forces by land, like those by sea, was arrested by the vigilance of Louis, who had invited the Count of Cajazzo, against the enemy, with five hundred men of arms: eight hundred French lancers were with him †, under the Lord of Obigny; troops began to de-file towards Lombardy, but this body obliged the Neapolitans to halt in Romagna.

King Charles, having overcome all his difficulties, which had been very considerable‡, marched on the 23rd August. A ray of hope, however, darted upon Italy, that the storm would blow over. Charles, upon his arrival in Asti was taken ill with the small-pox; and certainly if the disease had been tedious, as it was the month of September, and the winter had set in, French impatience and the want of money would have made all hopes of the enterprise vanish. But Charles being re-established in health, after a month followed his journey. He commanded a small army, but formed of

\* Guicc. Ammir. loc. cit.

† Comines says 200.

‡ The greatest difficulty was the want of money: see Comines, cap. 9. We shall see how often this enterprise was countermanded, and how many princesses lent the court their jewels, in order to be put in pawn. He had taken from one bank of Genoa nearly 100,000 francs, the interest of which, in four months amounted to 14,000. He took in loan the jewels from Madame of Savoy, and pawned them for 12,000 ducats; afterwards those of the young widow of the marquis of Monferrato, which were also pawned for 12,000 ducats. After the narration that author finishes thus: "Et pouvez voir quel commencement de guerre c'était, si Dieu n'eut guidé l'œuvre." These difficulties prove the poverty of that kingdom in those times.



the flower of troops, having, besides 1,600 men at arms\*, 6,000 Swiss infantry, the most warlike soldiery of those times, and 6,000 French, who were equally good and admirably disciplined. The Italian troops were inferior to the French. The long wars between the French and English, the conquest made by the latter, of the greater part of the kingdom of France, and the victories of the French, whereby the English had been finally driven out of it, had, since the last century, refined the art of war, and made these two nations superior to all others in arms, and consequently to the Italians. The celebrated days of Crecy, of Poitiers and Agincourt, had been the most destructive, whilst in the trifling battles of Italy, so justly ridiculed by Macchiavel, frequently without the loss of a single man, the troops turned their attention only to plunder the prisoners, and consequently fought in great confusion. The infantry, especially, which, with warlike nations, has at all times formed the nerve of their army, was composed in Italy of a mob united for the purposes of tumult, badly armed, which fought without order, and, being soon thrown into confusion in the field, could easily be routed by any close column, which fought by regular attack. The artillery, although long since made use of by the Italians, rather in the defence and attack of places, than in the field, was far better managed by the French†. With such a difference in discipline, the Italians, who were not united, could not expect to be enabled to resist.

King Charles, entering Lombardy, was received and assisted with large sums by Louis, and came to Pavia, in

\* To every man of arms or lance belonged six horses, amongst which two bowmen.—Guicc. lib. 1.

† Guicc. lib. 1.

the castle of which city were the young duke, his wife Isabella and children, under arrest. Louis chose not that the king should lodge in the castle, probably in order that he might not see or speak with this unfortunate family. The French, therefore, dreaded treachery. The king insisting upon lodging there, the sentinels were doubled\*. He saw and conversed with the duchess. The former was consumed by a lingering disease, attributed by most people to poison given him by his uncle; by others, to the immoderate use he made of conjugal pleasures†. The sight of these unfortunate persons, and of the duke, cousin-german of the king, must have excited compassion in a young warrior like Charles; the more so as the beautiful and young Isabella had thrown herself at his feet, and not daring before Louis to speak of herself, and her husband, entreated him in favour of her father. The king, not wishing to give offence to Louis, answered her only in general terms, but evinced compassion for this unfortunate family‡.

Charles continued his journey, and scarcely was he arrived at Plaisance, when he received the news of the death of the young duke, accelerated probably by the perfidious Louis, on account of the compassion he had experienced. Louis, without loss of time, caused himself to be proclaimed Duke of Milan, by the governors of

\* Comines, *Chronique de Charles VIII.*, chap. 10.

† Guicciardini affirms that Theodore of Pavia, one of the physicians who was present at the visit of Charles, saw the marks of poison; but besides the difficulty of recognising the signs of a slow poison, which the most learned physicians of our times would not know, Comines assures us none was present at that visit. It is true, that the character of Louis rendered it probable.

‡ No Frenchman or Italian was present at this conversation, but the king related it to Comines, saying that he had a great wish to warn this young man of his danger.

that city, to the prejudice of the son of the deceased, setting before them, that the dangerous circumstances of the times demanded a man of mature sense for the government, and not a child. He obtained the diploma, too, from the Emperor Maximilian, wherein reasons of preference were given, which even the lowest mechanic would have disdained to adduce\*. The French vanguard, commanded by the Count of Montpensier, passing the mountains at Parma, had already arrived in Tuscany, taken Fivizzano by assault†, and cut the garrison to pieces. The king, with the remains of his army, entered the Lunigiana, run down the river Magra, passed Fossa Nuova‡, arrived at Sarzana, and had begun to lay siege to Sarzanella, a very strong fortress, built by the celebrated Castruccio.

The alarm excited in Florence at this news was very great, although it might have been easily foreseen. The republic saw herself exposed to all the fury of the French army, almost without other defence, the troops of the king and the pope, being obliged to remain at Rome on account of the movements of Colonna. The cities murmured loudly, as happens generally in public misfortunes, but they had now great reason to do so against both the government and Peter de Medicis, as the author

\* It was said that Louis was son of the great Francis Sforza when already Duke of Milan; and his elder brother, who succeeded Francis, was born before he became duke.—Corio Ist. de Mil. Jovius, Hist. lib. 2. This singular cavil appears copied from the history of Plutarch, who relates it as made use of by the mother of Cyrus, to cause him to be preferred to his brother in the succession.—Plutar. Vita Artas.

† The king took this road preferably to that of La Marche, stimulated by Louis, who had views upon Pisa, and by the young Medicis, enemies of Piero.

‡ Fossa Nuova, or Fossa Papiriona now Fosdinuovo.

of them. In this melancholy state of affairs, Peter embraced the measure of going in person to meet the King of France, and endeavour to appease him. He had the example of his father before him, who had thus gained King Ferdinand ; but talents failed him. He was at the head of an embassy of respectable citizens, whom he however left behind at Pietra Santa\*. He arrived at Sarzana, whilst the king was laying siege to Sarzanello, and met with a better reception from him than he expected ; since whatever change the French nation may, at various times, have effected in the principles of government, she has always preserved a superiority over others in affability and gentleness of manners. Peter considered, from his usual light conclusions, that he had immediately made him his friend ; whereupon the king, desiring pledges of security, went so far as to concede to him more than the French themselves could have expected, that is to say, the fortresses of Sarzanello, of Sarzana, of Pietra Santa, of Leghorn, and Pisa, and for which consignment he had only a promise in writing from the king, that these places should be restored to the republic immediately upon the enterprise of Naples being terminated ; a writing useful indeed to private individuals, who may be summoned to a tribunal, but useless amongst armed powers, when not accompanied with force. The error certainly was great, as well as the mischief which proceeded from it. Although Tuscany, at protracted wars, was not capable of resisting the French arms, she might arrest them for a considerable time, and the delay was pernicious ; Peter, therefore, by shewing more firmness, might without injury to his

\* Nardi, Ist. Fior. lib. 1. Giov. lib. 1. Guicciard. Ist. lib. 1., says that he waited for his pass at Pietra Santa.

country, have obtained a more useful and honourable adjustment. He erred, too, in disposing of the places of the republic without consulting the heads of the government, since, even in better times, and when he was almost absolute master, it was necessary in a state like Florence to represent at least a farce of dependance upon the magistrates, who rather pardon concealed violence than open insult. Peter, however, accustomed to power since a boy, considered it as hereditary, and the words of flatterers, and his own incapacity, permitted him not either to see the dangers to which he exposed himself, or the arts of preserving the state.

The indignation, shewn by the Florentines at Peter, was very great, when it became known that he had given the principal bulwarks of the state into the hands of the enemy, and had disposed of them as an absolute prince, without consulting the other heads of the government, not even his companions in the embassy. Peter hearing of the ill disposition of the citizens towards him, returned to Florence, to appease the tumults by his presence; but he found the country in agitation, and his friends under alarm. He endeavoured to enter the palace, which was kept shut; but Lucas Corsini, one of the signiors, hastening to the door, prevented his entrance\*. Then it was, that all the insignificance of this man became manifest; incapable alike of planning or of executing vigorous measures, ignorant of any expedient in such a dangerous moment, he stood thunderstruck and inactive. He had ordered Orsino to approach Florence with troops: but he knew not how to derive any advantage

\* Ammir. Istor. lib. 26. Guicciardini mentions Jacop Nerli, as also Philip Neri does, Comm. II.; Nardi, too, mentions the two abovementioned, and one Gualterotti.

from them ; nay, it was imputed to him as a crime, and a motive for making the people rebel, who repaired, however doubtful, to the square of the signiors. It was added, that Francis Valori, one of the useless associates in the embassy with Peter, had rapidly returned to Florence. He was a virtuous man, but a rigid republican, and he was reported to be at the head of the rebellion.

This slight movement, exaggerated by report, struck so much terror into Peter, who, deprived of that cool discernment, which allows affairs to be seen quietly in their true aspect, ran from one extreme to another. Sometimes confiding too much in the king, at others thinking himself betrayed by him, either presuming too much upon his authority and party, or thinking himself abandoned by all his friends, who were still numerous, and who would have come forward in greater number, and evinced more courage, had they seen the contest even doubtful, and the head shewing any signs of vigour, he took the very worst resolution. Mounting on horseback, with his brothers, he fled rapidly from Florence\*, and so greatly had fright got possession of his mind, that, seeking shelter, neither from the King Charles, who, grateful for the concessions he had made him, would have brought him back to Florence, and stipulated at least advantageous conditions for him, in the treaty with the Florentines, if he had not replaced him in the full exercise of his power†; nor from the pontiff

\* Guicciar. lib. 1. Jovi Hist. lib. 1. Nardi, lib. 1. These two latter say that the cardinal disguised himself as a friar.

† We discover plainly that this would have happened, because the king, before leaving Florence, recalled him, too, with his letters, and many of the king's counsellors advised the same.

and the Arragonese, his allies, for whom he suffered so much, he repaired to Bologna, without further counsel or project. The consequence of his flight was, that he was declared a rebel, together with his brothers, and his two palaces sacked, viz., that of the Casino of Saint Mark, and that of the Cardinal at Saint Anthony's; but the populace were prevented entering the principal palace in the Broad-street, (*Via Larga*), which was intended to receive King Charles\*.

Thus, by the imprudence and frivolity evinced by this man, the power and fortune of the house of Medicis were ruined in an instant, which the sense and wisdom displayed by so many great men had solidly confirmed, to a degree, that nothing short of the most ample favours of fortune, which advanced two of that family to the popedom, were necessary to re-establish it. Peter soon began to perceive what a difference a change of fortune produces in friends. Bentivoglio, his dependant, received him coolly at Bologna, and reproached him with his pusillanimity, in abandoning his country without fighting. From Bologna he went to Venice, where he met fresh humiliations; he was stopped, and not permitted to enter, only after considerable difficulty, and scarcely found the means of subsistence†.

In the mean time, the king followed up his march. He was met in Lucca by another embassy of the Floren-

\* Although many historians, both ancient and modern, have considered this palace as sacked, the improbability soon appears, since it was destined to receive the king. And, in fact, Nardi, probably an eye-witness, and Giovio say, that the two mentioned palaces were only sacked. Even Cevretani, in his manuscript history, says the same.

† Comines Cronique. Amm. Ist. lib. 26. Jov. lib. 2. Guicciard. Ist. lib. 1. Nardi, lib. 1.

tines, amongst whom was the friar Jerome Savonarola, who had began to interfere in public affairs. But, as if the concessions made by Peter, of the important cities and fortresses, were of no consequence, the king explained himself only in general and vague terms, leaving Father Jerome to declaim, even indiscreetly, in name of Heaven, and paying as much regard to his threats as to the arms of the Florentines\*. Louis Sforza, who had directed the march of the king on this side, entertained views upon the occupation of Pisa. But scarcely was the king arrived there, received with the greatest joy, when the Pisan people began to shout for *liberty*, to which the king could not adhere, without breaking the capitulations established with Peter. Simon Orlandi, a Pisan, a man of talent, of courage, and an enemy of the Florentines, conferred upon the design with other citizens, and all being reciprocally animated, after electing him (Simon,) ambassador, on account of his being well versed in the French language, hastened suddenly to meet the king, who resided in the palace of the Medici†, where, Simon prostrating himself with others, at his feet, exposed, in such a pathetic oration, the miseries the Pisans suffered under the intolerable yoke of the

\* Nardi, lib. 1. Jov. lib. 1.

† It was once the palace Pesciolini, afterwards Finocchietti, and now in the possession of the family Pieracchi. Some writers have pretended that the king lodged in the palace of the Charity of the Cathedral; but they are contradicted by all the other writers, who make him lodge where we have indicated; he dined, however, once in that palace, which is confirmed by the following inscription over the said palace:

“ Adile Joanne Mariani

Cristianiss. Gallorum Hierusalem et Siciliæ citra Farum Rex Carolus VIII in his divæ mariæ ædibus idus Novembris MCCCCVC ex insperato comedit,” &c.



Florentines ; exaggerated, with so much eloquence, the pride and overbearing conduct of the latter, that both the king, and all the barons and officers surrounding him, were greatly affected. The king, raising his hand at the favourable appeal made to him, and declaring he would do what was just, this answer became interpreted as a concession of liberty. They departed full of joy, shouting out that they had been declared free by the king, broke the arms of the Florentines in pieces, threw their marble lion into the Arno, and placed the statue of King Charles upon its basis\*.

The king, leaving the old citadel in the hands of the Pisans, and placing a French garrison in the new one, commanded by Entraghes, came towards Florence, and stopped at Signa, in the villa of Pandolfini, both in order that the tumults, in the mean time, might be over in Florence, and that his other troops might approach on the side of Bologna, to impress the city with greater terror. He afterwards entered Florence with pomp, on the 17th of November†, with the lance on his thigh, which, according to the French custom, indicated the lordship over that city, followed by a numerous band of armed men, was received at the gates with all possible ceremony by the clergy and the magistrates,

\* Jovi Hist. lib. relates this event at length. Comines, Cron. de Charl. VIII. adds that the statue of the king was afterwards taken away, and that of the emperor erected.

† In the manuscript history of Bartholomy Cerretani, who was then living at Florence, the person of the king is thus described : " He was as little a man as I have ever seen, of white complexion, hair between black and red, very large head, blue eyes, large nose, shoes or slippers of black velvet, and round in a manner, that it looked like the foot of an ox or horse : he demanded that the Medici's should be restored."

amidst the joyful acclamations of the populace, who always applaud a show, and are fond of novelty. He took up his lodgings in the house of Medicis, and many of his officers and soldiers were quartered in the city, which, being generally illuminated at night, and adorned with festive preparations by day, presented the idea of a festival in the midst of the greatest danger.

After the usual ceremonies were over, they began to treat of an agreement. The first demands of the king were exorbitant. Forgetful of the convention he had made with Peter, he made pretensions to being recognised master of Florence: this rich city excited the avidity of the French soldiery, and, although the conditions of peace he proposed varied every day, they were still very grievous. Four persons, chosen from amongst the principal citizens, treated with him. Amongst them was Peter Capponi, a family abounding in honest and useful citizens, who had always served their country with zeal and integrity. The king caused the principal articles of agreement to be read in the presence of his officers, to the four citizens, at the harshness of which the deputies objected; when the king told them, in a rage, that he would give them conditions by his trumpets, which inflamed Peter with generous anger, who, snatching the paper from the hands of the secretary of the king, tore it in his face, telling him: *You shall give us conditions by your trumpets, and we in our bells; (Voi darete nelle vostre trombe, e noi nelle nostre campane,)* and without saying a word more, left the room with his companions\*.

This lofty and determined conduct, which might have exposed the country to great danger, proved her salva-

\* Ammir. Ist. lib. 26. Nardi Ist. lib. 1. Guicciar. lib. 1.

tion. The energy evinced by Peter, in which it might have reasonably been believed the greater part of the inhabitants of so populous a city participated, made such an impression on the minds of the French, that they thought they ought to propose far more moderate conditions. The action of Peter has been variously judged by posterity, and very respectable historians have not failed to assert\* that it was rather fortunate than prudent, and that he exposed his country to ruin. But let us weigh well all the circumstances. The king was within the walls of a populous city, the citizens of which were accustomed already to civil contentions, and possessed sufficient courage to fight, particularly in defence of their homes, and families†. The troops of the king were not numerous; and the bravest soldiers, having no convenience within a city to perform their evolutions, may be easily overpowered, even by a disorderly but irritated multitude, which can assail them on every side from the roofs, the windows, and the narrow streets; a small proof of which they had received a few days before, when a dispute arising between the natives and the French soldiers, they fought for more than an hour without the latter deriving any advantage; whilst the Swiss infantry, quartered within and without the gate to Prato, wishing to force Borgo Ognissanti, in order to approach the dwelling of the king, were driven back with arms

\* Ammir. loc. cit.

† Cerretani, in a speech of Capponi to his fellow-citizens, says that he exhorts them to hold themselves ready and secretly armed, in order to show their countenance, and even their arms, to King Charles if necessary; adding that Messer Francis Soderini, Bishop of Volterra, at the council of the three hundred, explained the precautions already taken to defend the city, that at every mile, armed troops were posted, in some places three, others 9,000 infantry.

and stones, until the affray was finally settled by the interference of the more sober citizens and officers\*. Precautions had, indeed, been taken in Florence against any accident of violence; all the troops that could be collected in the district, were secretly called to Florence, and concealed in the houses, and many of the Florentine generals were summoned to their posts, under various pretexts†, and orders given that at the sound of the bell of the palace, both in the city and country, all were to take up arms. It would, therefore, have been very dangerous for the French to have reduced the Florentines to desperation, which is the mother of courage, and of extraordinary actions‡. Whatever misfortune happened, too, to the French arms, would have carried along with it the defeat of the principal object, the conquest of Naples. To withdraw the troops, and attempt the siege in form, would have been the loss of a very precious time to the king, and of which the enemies of Charles might have profited; whilst the length of the sieges in those times, and the fertile endeavours of some of the emperors, who had attempted that of Florence, were examples which the French held continually before their eyes.

These reflections prove the action of Peter to have been neither imprudent, nor dictated by a blind rashness, but as emanating from that vigour and courage, which were founded upon a consciousness of his own strength, a courage which it is the duty of good citizens to display, whenever they see their country in danger of being humbled and oppressed. This action may be said

\* Nardi Ist. lib. 1.

† Guicc. lib. 1.

‡ It is not many years since the most disciplined troops were partly killed, partly imprisoned, partly driven from Genoa by the people.

to have been one of the greatest energy shown by Italy in the invasion of Charles, so much the more laudable, too, because we meet with it in the midst of one continued scene of cowardice and treachery.

The king, surprised at the magnanimous action of Peter, called him back\*, and more just and moderate conditions were proposed: that the city was to be under the protection of the King of France, with whom she was to enter into alliance; that the cities and castles, conceded to the king by Peter de Medicis, should remain in his hands until the enterprise of Naples was finished; the revenues, however, were to be collected by the Florentines; that 120,000 dollars were to be paid to the king in three proportions: to which was added the liberation of Peter, and the brothers Medicis from exile, and their estates from confiscation, upon the agreement that Peter should not approach within one hundred miles of Florence; with some other conditions of minor importance†.

The part the king took in favour of Peter, proves that if this man had been more wise, he had an opportunity of repairing his losses. If he had returned to Florence with the king to rouse his party, which would have come forward with greater courage, he might have been honourably replaced. Many barons and officers of the king, either joined by the faction of the Medicis (and particularly Monsieur de Bles, who lived in the house of Tornabuoni) or from political motives, spoke in favour of Peter. And it appeared, indeed, that the Flo-

\* The king calling him back, joking upon what had happened, told him laughing, "Ah Chapon, chapon vous etes un mal Chapon."—Nardi Istor. Fior. lib. 1.

† Ammir. lib. 26. Nardi. lib. 1. Giov. lib. 2. Guicciard. lib. 1.

rentine republic would have more easily maintained her devotion to the house of France, governed by one family which had received benefits from the latter, than left to her own free independence. Be this as it may, scarcely was the king arrived in Florence, when he invited Peter by letter, and promised to re-establish him in his ancient power. The letters were sent to him at Venice. Peter asked the advice of the chief persons in that republic. They, who saw, in the re-establishment of Peter, the Florentine republic becoming subject to the king, against whom they were beginning to form secret conspiracies, dissuaded him from going with the greatest warmth, placing before his eyes the danger of placing himself in the hands of armed enemies, and of irritated citizens, and flattered the credulous youth with the hope that the Venetian government would give itself every care to replace him honourably in his country\*. Thus the incautious Peter suffered a moment to escape that fortune had presented him with, and which never returned during the whole of his life. The principal articles of this treaty were solemnly sworn to in San Reparata by both parties, in the midst of a solemn mass. The king remained there ten days, from the 17th to the 27th of November.

His vanguard, led on by the Duke of Montpensier, had, in the mean time, advanced to Sienna, where he was received without opposition; but this ferocious man,

\* Guicciard. *Istor.* lib. 1. Comines. *Croniq. de Char.* chap. 13. Comines was ambassador of Charles in Venice. He relates that the Venetians would not receive Peter, and made him stay two days without the city, until they learnt from the ambassador that the king had nothing against him. Besides the perfidious counsels given to Peter, the Venetians would have added violence, if it had been necessary, having placed persons secretly about Peter to prevent his departure for Florence.—*Oricellarius, de Bello Italio.*

searching for the friends of the King of Naples, Messer Anthony of Venafrò, who read in that university, was pointed out to him, whom he caused to be arrested, although by the urgent representation, made by the king to the Siennese, orders arrived that he should be immediately released. The French demanded 30,000 ducats ; but the king arriving on the 2nd of December, was received with infinite applause, and diverted from the demand at the entreaties made to him. Besides triumphal arches and other similar preparations, with which he was received, a little boy, dressed as the Holy Virgin, recited to him some Latin verses at the gate\*.

Charles left Sienna two days afterwards, and prosecuted his journey towards Rome. The Arragonese and the pope were panic-struck at the success with which the French advanced. The Duke of Calabria, seeing that the Florentines were not in a condition to contend with them, retired from Romagna towards Rome, where he staid until the arrival of Charles. The nobility of Romagna recommended to the Florentine government, had, at first, followed their system, and had opposed the French ; but seeing the fate of the Florentines, agreed with the former, who were, therefore, without opposition on this side.

The pope, uncertain what part to take, and full of apprehension, wished and unwished at every moment ; made dispositions to escape from Rome, and then revoked them. He sent to treat in vain with Charles, who

• Here are the Verses :

*Inclite Francorum Rex, invictissime Regum,  
Unica Christocolæ spes, et fiducia gentis,  
Ingredire, et felix subeas mea mœnia sacris  
Auspiciis, nam te ipsa libero, vultuque sereno  
Urbe mea accipio, felicibus annuo cœptis,  
Committaque tibi Senonum de nomine Senas.*

had arrived at Nepi, and the greater part of the Roman Campagna was already occupied by the French. The pope saw his imminent ruin. Many cardinals, who were his enemies, instigated the king to be pleased to make reformatations in the church by means of a council, and cause a process to be made against a pontiff, whose scandalous life, at the first session, would have furnished sufficient motive for deposing him. But the hurry of the king for the enterprise of Naples, proved the salvation of the pope. The latter was obliged, however, to receive the law from the conqueror\*, who promised him, he would not interfere in ecclesiastical affairs, and desired to pass through Rome, entering by the gate of the people, (*Porta del Popolo*), whilst the Duke of Calabria went out by that of S. Sebastian.

Although the pope, counselled probably by his own conscience, had retired to Castel San Angelo, and chose not to cede it, although it was in contemplation to lay siege to it with artillery, a certain reverence towards the majesty of the pontificate, and the influence of the counselors of Charles, who were gained by presents and promises made by the pope, were able to effect more in the mind of the former. An agreement was then entered into, the principal articles of which were the consignment of the fortresses of Civita Vecchia and Terracina, for the security of the king in advancing towards Naples; that he should pardon the cardinals and barons, who had followed the party of Alphonso, and that the pope should give him the investiture of the kingdom of Naples†.

Zim or Gemme, son of the great Mahomet, and brother of the reigning Bajazet, was in the hands of the pope. He had escaped from his brother, with whom

\* Guicc. lib. 1. Jovius, lib. 2.

† Guicc, e Giov. loc. cit.



he contended for the empire, had first sought shelter from the Knights of Rhodes, and was consigned by the Grand Master to Pope Innocent VIIIth. Bajazet, who dreaded his brother would return, and throw his states into confusion, treated with Pope Alexander, that he might either be pleased to give him up, murder him, or keep him always guarded. The pope accepted the third offer, together with the annual tribute of 40,000 ducats, which Bajazet paid him either for the maintenance of his brother, or his imprisonment.

Charles wished to get this Turkish prince into his hand, as he was flattered by his courtiers and his own youthful fancy that, after the conquest of Naples, he might make that of the Turkish states; and this man would then prove useful to his interests\*. Cardinal Valentine, the son of the pope, was obliged to go as hostage for the established conditions; and hardly were the French entered the kingdom, when he escaped by flight, and Gemme died, as was generally believed by poison, ordered to be given

\* *Alleg. Alleg. Diar. San. Giov. Ist. lib. 2. Guicc. lib. 1.*—All the treaties between the pope and Bajazet may be read at length in the life of Duke Valentine, written by Thomas Tommasi, where are found both the instructions in Latin, given to George Buzzardo, sent by the pope to Bajazet, and the insinuations of threatening the Venetians with war, if they did not oppose Charles VIII., and give the succours he demanded to oppose the said Charles. The curious letter of Bajazet to Pope Alexander is found too in the collection of letters of the princes, or to the Princes of Ziletti, lib. 2. A part of these documents were taken, together with the sum of 40,000 ducats, by John della Rovere, prefect of Sinigaglia, brother of the Cardinal Julius, in the disembarkation of the nuncio of the pope, and the messenger of Bajazet at that place, and the writings were sent to Charles, whilst he was in Florence, in order that he might know the tricks of the pope.

him by Alexander \*, that he might receive a large premium from the brother.

Every thing yielded in the mean time to the arms of the French : the enmity borne against the Arragonese fought for them. Ferdinand and Alphonso, by their perfidy and cruelty, had irritated the greater part of the barons, and the descendants of the unhappy victims, harboured

always an enmity, which failed not in shewing it-  
 1495. self on this occasion. Alphonso, seeing himself surrounded on every side by enemies, the worst of whom were his own subjects, perceiving his troops every where retreating, and the enemy advancing, hearing the ferment of the people, which began to break into open rebellion, thought fit to abdicate the throne, by renouncing it to his son Ferdinand, a young man esteemed for his talents, and beloved for his virtues, which shone the more conspicuous by contrast with the vices of the father and grandfather. Thus he hoped, that the people, who were ready to rebel against him, would remain faithful to this innocent youth.

Having made the cession, he took refuge in Sicily in the city of Mazara, with all the precious moveables he possessed; and, retiring into a convent of Olivetan friars, he gave himself up to works of charity. Spiritual balsam, however, was not sufficient to appease the wounds of the mind, and in this same year he terminated his mortal career, at the age of forty-seven †.

The abdication had been made too late, for rebellion and terror prevailed throughout the kingdom. The

\* It is generally thought his death was preceded by poison given him by the pontiff.

† Sanut. Ist. Ven. Sunn. Ist. Napol. Guicciard. Ist. lib. 1. Allegr. Alleg. Diar. Ser. says the King Alphonso, has resigned. . . . having had fits for many years, is said to be mad, &c.

Neapolitan troops no where made any resistance. After useless attempts, Ferdinand retired, first to Naples, and afterwards to the island of Ischia, where he was hardly received by the faithless governor. King Charles had spent little more than the trouble of the journey in the conquest of this kingdom. The keys of the cities were every where laid at his feet, and he entered Naples amidst the greatest applause of an inconstant populace, who, in expectation of novelty, always give a good reception to the last comers.

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## CHAPTER X.

VARIOUS OPINIONS UPON THE GOVERNMENT TO BE ESTABLISHED IN FLORENCE.—CHARACTER OF FRIAR JEROME SAVONAROLA.—ALLIANCE OF THE ITALIAN POWERS AGAINST THE FRENCH.—LEVITY OF CHARLES VIII.—GOES FROM NAPLES.—BATTLE OF THE TARO.—VICTORIES OF THE FRENCH.—THEIR LOSSES IN OTHER PARTS OF ITALY.—THE ARRAGONESE RECOVER NAPLES WITH THE AID OF CONSALVO.—CHARLES ARRIVES AT ASTI, ORDERS PISA AND LEGHORN TO BE RESTORED TO THE FLORENTINES.—THE FLORENTINES ARM THEMSELVES, AND MARCH AGAINST PISA.—DEATH OF PIER CAPPONI.—DESCENT OF THE EMPEROR IN AID OF THE PISANS.—BESIEGES LEGHORN.—DEARTH IN FLORENCE.—THE FRENCH SUCCOUR LEGHORN.—THE EMPEROR IS OBLIGED TO RETREAT.—USELESS ATTEMPT MADE BY PETER OR PIERO DE MEDICIS TO RE-ENTER FLORENCE.—FRIAR JEROME RECOMMENCES PREACHING.—IS EXCOMMUNICATED BY THE PONTIFF.—RIVALS OF FRIAR JEROME AMONGST THE AUGUSTINS AND FRANCISCANS.—CHALLENGE BY THE TRIAL OF FIRE.—TUMULT ON THIS OCCASION.—FRIAR JEROME WITH HIS COMPANIONS IS ARRESTED.—HIS PROCESS AND DEATH.

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THE exile of Peter de Medicis, the departure of King Charles from Florence left the city in confusion and dismay. The republic had lost an important part of her territory, a part remained in the hands of the French, other districts were in rebellion; whilst the large sums she had been obliged to pay, and others with the payment of which she was threatened, gave rise to strong discontents: but the greatest cause of agitation was to be found in the form of government now to be established.

She had been governed for sixty years, under apparent republican forms, by the house of Medicis as sovereigns ; who, in so long a period of time, were become acquainted with the method of masking their absolute power. The attempts made to liberate the republic from the dominion of Peter the father, of Lorenzo the son, had only given a greater consolidation to the edifice, and it was easy to foresee that had not Charles arrived, or another generation succeeded, which resembled Cosimo or Lorenzo, the sovereignty of the Medicis would have been formally established.

Mankind become accustomed to every kind of government. After the lapse of so many years, there was hardly any person alive who had seen the Florentine republic: a new race had sprung up, wont to serve and receive acts of beneficence from the Mediccan house, and to consider that house as their sovereign. As this family was now expelled from their country, the ancient contentions were renewed, and in seeking what kind of government ought to be established, opinions became very different. No small number of citizens, accustomed under the government of the Medicis to exercise almost exclusively the most important offices of the state, although disgusted by the pride, arrogant manners, and incapacity of Peter, they had become hostile to him, wished to campaign, as it were, under a new chief ; but without any change of the accustomed method of command. Others again, considering it as defective and even tyrannical, wished that all the citizens might enjoy a right, from which no judgment could exclude them. The former, however, more dexterous in the art of leading the people, summoned them, without loss of time, into the square to discussion, and asking them if two-thirds were assembled, they were answered yes: (an

useless but customary form) and demanded the usual power to reform the state. The people, who thought of exercising an act of sovereignty, did not oppose it\*. They created, therefore, the twenty usual couplers (*Accoppiatori*;) or those who had the right of scrutiny, and classed those citizens in the lots who were thought fit for the exercise of employments. Amongst these twenty was Lorenzo Piero Francis de Medicis, who returning with his brother from exile, at the entrance of Charles, as almost all the outlaws had returned, had, in order to show his hatred against the expelled family, and to flatter the people, changed the name of *Medicis* into that of *Popolani*†. Probably the most dexterous of the organizing party wished to avail themselves of the latter title, in order to give a name to the faction, as of an apparent head, of which they formed the active members; but the contrary party, although less hasty in action, was increasing in number, and declaimed against the couplers, who, as the summit of folly, stood divided, nor possessed a head able to conduct the faction, as they had excluded some of the most capable and powerful amongst them, and amongst the rest Pagolo Antonio Soderini, who from animosity had gone over to the contrary party‡. Friar Jerome Savonarola added his stimulus and sermons, to give greater strength to this party.

\* All the provisions made by the government, at this period, in the month of December, are to be found in the Archive of the reformations, and it would be timesome and useless to repeat them. They are in Class 2. Dist. 2. n. 187.

† The same ideas are easily renewed in similar cases. We have seen, in these latter years, the Duke of Orleans assume the title of *Egalité*, in order to flatter the French people.

‡ Filippo Nerli *Comin. lib. 4. Nardi. Istor. libro. 2. Gucciard. lib. 2.*

This singular man, who has played so interesting a part in these times, in the Florentine government, was born in Ferrara, of a Paduan family. His grandfather had exercised the profession of physician with great credit in the service of the house of Este. His ardent imagination had made him fly from the world, and without the knowledge or approbation of his family, he put on the habit of a Dominican friar in Bologna, at the age of twenty-two years. He was highly distinguished in sciences, and particularly in preaching, but above all for the sanctity of his manners, and the austerity of his life. Lorenzo the Magnificent, who sought out men of merit of every description, invited him to Florence, where he became prior of the convent of St. Mark; but either disdaining to pay his court to the great, or hating the usurpation of the government of the Medicis, he kept himself always distant from that house, which house as founders of the convent, the superiors were wont to cultivate; and whenever Lorenzo visited it, or appeared in the garden, Friar Jerome shut himself up in his closet. As long, however, as Lorenzo was alive, although Jerome omitted not attacking him in private discourses, he would not venture publicly to raise his voice against him, either that he was disarmed by his moderation, or knew the inefficacy of his words. At his death, the courage of the friar increased; and in the present reformation, in his preaching, his fame, in which had become so great, he ventured to mix political discussions with the maxims of the gospel. The right of addressing the assembled people, which belonged to consuls, and to emperors, had been continued to the ministers of the sanctuary after the ruin of the Roman empire, and the establishment of the christian religion. This most powerful arm, capable of exciting and of quelling popular tumults, became

even still more formidable in the sacred ministers, who, speaking in the name of heaven, are attended to by the multitude with a devout partiality ; whence, sometimes, instead of confining themselves to their sacred duties, they took part in political events, and making an abuse of their ascendancy over the people, excited, for the most part, dangerous tumults ; for secular governments can never be sufficiently vigilant in order to repress these factious missionaries. Such was Friar Jerome. A lover of the popular government, either from principle, or in order to make himself more acceptable to the people, he not only advised them modestly, but putting on the prophetic tone of the priests of Israel, dared peremptorily to announce such was the will of heaven, which spoke with his tongue ; and explained his principles at length in a sermon to which he had invited the nobility, the magistrates and the people, (and from which women and children were excluded,) by mixing theology, politics, and prophecies\*. He was considered, by a numerous concourse of the citizens, as one inspired by heaven, because in his former sermons, he had announced to Florence, and to Italy, those misfortunes which every good politician could foresee, and which being verified, gave to him a high consideration. His voice thundering from the pulpit, amongst the two parties, gave the stroke to the balance, and caused the popular government to prevail. Julian Salviati, one of the twenty couplers, was the first to obey the friar, by resigning his office, and after him all the others, either voluntary or by compulsion†.

The ancient aristocratic form, which had prevailed for sixty years, being now overthrown, a general council was

\* Nardi, Istor. Fior. lib. 1.

† Nardi, Ist. Fior. lib. 1. 2, Filip. Narli, Com. lib. 4



made, in which all the citizens, capable of being employed, had votes. It was composed of eight hundred and thirty honest citizens, and as they were called, of clear consciences (*netti di specchio*) above thirty years of age: the number, however, was increased as far as 1755. From these the magistrates for the city, and the state, were elected; an election mixed of the poll and of lot, since they were to be favoured by the latter, and approved by the former. From each quarter were taken by lot twenty-four candidates, for the election of two signiors or nobles (*Signori*), twenty for the gonfaloniere, and he who had most votes had conquered. It was ordained that all the pecuniary provisions, and other more important laws, should be made in this council, and an act of indemnity was also published, by which no one could be persecuted for past crimes\*. In order to receive so numerous an assembly, the vast hall in the palace of the signiors was begun to be built by advice of the friar, and was finished with such rapidity, that he asserted the angels had performed the work of bricklayers†.

Whilst the Florentines were labouring to give a better and a more free form to their government, their external affairs had not improved; although the king had finished his conquest, and the Florentines had paid him a part of the sum agreed upon. The city of Pisa returned not under their dominion according to agreement; but rather the Pisans, favoured by the French officers, becoming the aggressors, occupied various castles of the Florentines situate in their vicinity. The latter made

\* Nardi, Ist. lib. 2. Guicciard. lib. 2. Amm. lib. 26.

† Nerli, Comm. lib. 4. It was a work of Simone del Pollajolo, called the Chronicle, a friend of the friar. The hall, hastily made, proved to be low and not very light. It was afterwards raised and adorned by George Vasari under Cosmo I.

no delay in sending troops, who succeeded in regaining the castles, and had begun to straighten Pisa, when they were recalled towards the valley of Chiana, where Montepulciano had rebelled and gone over to the Siennese\*. Complaints were made, by the Florentines, to King Charles against the Siennese, on account of this act†. They insinuated probably with the art of finesse, that Pisa into which, under pretext of aid, the Duke of Milan had introduced troops with Malvezzo their leader, might fall into the hands of the duke himself, who, having changed his views, began to appear an enemy of Charles. This advice produced an effect rather prejudicial than serviceable to the Florentines, because the king, as a more certain protection, sent six hundred soldiers from Naples by sea, who being gained over immediately by the Pisans, instead of holding them in restraint, joined them, made inroads, and conquered the important fortress of Librafatta‡.

In the mean time the princes and Italian republics were struck with surprise and terror at the unexpected prosperity of the French arms. The garrisons left in Sienna, in Pisa, in Pietra Santa, and other cities of the pontifical state, caused the former to dread the design of the French of reducing the whole of Italy to slavery; the more so as an ambitious man, appeared to be at the expense only of his wish to do so.

Louis Sforza was the first to recognise his own folly in having drawn a destructive storm upon Italy, which threatened his states, in which the Duke of Orleans, the

\* Alleg. Allegr. Diar. San.

† The king sent an agent to Montepulciano, in order to intimate to that people to return under the dominion of the Florentines, but was not obeyed.—Alleg. loc. cit.

‡ Nardi, lib. 1. 2. Amm. lib. 26.

presumptive heir of King Charles, had the same rights as the latter had to the throne of Naples, and had already evinced the wish to make them good whenever the power failed him not\*. Louis was deluded too in his hopes of gaining Pisa, Pietra Santa, and Sarzana, as he had flattered himself: and after an immense expense, had effected only the ruin of his nearest relations, drawn down upon himself the universal hatred of the Italians, and exposed his states to the greatest danger. With the usual levity and perfidy with which he had favoured the French, he now began to foment a powerful alliance against them. It was easy to induce the Italian governments to this. The Venetians, the King of the Romans, the pope, with other Italian princes, at first secretly and afterwards openly, joined Louis; to whom was added also the King of Spain, not so much to succour his expelled relations, as on account of the danger to which Sicily was exposed.

The Florentines, however, rejecting every suggestion, maintained their faith with Charles†, from whom they hoped for the restitution of the states he held in hand. This alliance placed in arms one of the most powerful armies that Italy had seen for a long time, of which Francis, Duke of Mantua, was made captain-general. At the sound of these preparations, Charles hastened from Naples to quit Italy, leaving a kingdom of new acquisition in uncertainty, and panting to return to France with the same levity that he had left it. He would have been enabled to establish his power with more consistency in the kingdom, and in Italy, if, by

\* The Duke of Orleans had inherited his rights to the Duchy of Milan from Valentina Visconti, his grandmother.

† Oricellar. de Bello Ital. Jov. Hist. lib. 2. Sanut. de Bello Gall. Guicciard. Ist. lib. 2.

listening to the just reclamations made by so many cardinals and respectable prelates, he had convoked a council, in which, as we have above remarked, Alexander VI. would have been deposed; whilst Charles would have enjoyed the glory of liberating the church from a prince, who has degraded her by every description of crime. A new pope would have been his creature; and not only would have confirmed to him the investiture of the kingdom of Naples, an important ceremony in those times, but would have furnished him with arms and money to maintain his conquest. It would have been difficult for the forces which were preparing against him, to have come so far to attack him, considering the nature of the alliances, the want of money, and the difficulties which always arise therefrom; and if they had ventured to attack him they would have been easily destroyed, Charles being enabled to make use even of those troops which he was obliged to leave, in order to maintain the possession of the country. He resolved upon his departure with much precipitation and little wisdom, leaving Gilbert of Montpensier commandant of his troops in the kingdom. His army was very much diminished by desertions, and by garrisons left in the various towns he occupied throughout Italy, and a very large body was left in Naples, in order to keep the possession of it.

Already the unstable royalists began to declare again for the party of the Arragonese. Ferdinand had disembarked at Reggio; Don Frederick was at Brindisi; and the fleet of the King of Spain had shewn itself on the Neapolitan coasts. The conquest might have been lost with the same facility with which it had been gained. Nevertheless, levity, instability, the desire of again seeing France, caused that kingdom to be abandoned in

the midst of danger. Having selected, therefore, the flower of his troops, viz., 8,000 infantry, and 4,000 between men of arms and light cavalry\*, he hastily took the road towards France. The pope, thinking himself not secure in waiting for him, retired to Orvieto, and thence to Perugia. Charles remained six days in Sienna, where, finding the whole government in the midst of those disorders, which so frequently agitated that republic, and lamentations pouring in upon him from all sides, he exhorted them only to concord; and, upon their request, he left the Seigneur Ligni with two hundred lancers at their service†.

Florence was armed and united, and ready for every defence. The restitution of Pisa was treated for by means of ambassadors. This cause had been frequently agitated before the king; the Florentines had his promise in their favour, with the sums paid to him; the Pisans the compassion, which the miseries of their slavery, either real or exaggerated, excited: they had already often exposed them to the king, and particularly in Rome, through their fellow-citizen, Burgundio Lolo‡, consistorial advocate.

Amongst these miseries, few will think that the Florentines carried their cruelty so far as to prevent the Pisans from cleansing the ditches of the putrid waters, in order that the pestilential air might destroy them; since it would be the same as losing the advantage,

\* Jov. lib. 2. Writers vary as usual in the number of the troops. Comines says, that he had not in the whole 9,000 men.—Chap. 23.

† Allegr. All. Diar. Senen. Malevolti Ist. of Sienna, lib. 6. of the 3rd part. Comines, who was there with the king, says, "*La ville est de tout tems en partialité, et se gouverne plus follement que ville d'Italie.*" Croniq. de Char. chap. 23.

‡ O Lelo or Leoli. Guicciard. Ist. lib. 2.

which the dominion over a rich city would have given them. It is true, that at one period their cruel policy intended to depopulate that city, in order to secure to themselves the control over her\*; but the wisest citizens abhorred this false and atrocious policy, and provisions were frequently made to augment the population of Pisa, by conceding large privileges to whatever persons would go to establish themselves there†. Laws had been made at various times, by the Florentines, to augment the population of Pisa, and the cares of Lorenzo the Magnificent to re-establish, and, as it were, to found anew, the celebrated university, evince no great desire of destroying that city.

Burgundio was replied to in his accusations of cruelty in the laws, and exactions in imposts, by Francis Soderini, Florentine ambassador, that the Pisans were governed by the same laws and conditions as the other subject cities, who did not find them excessive. We perceive, however, the jealousy they entertained of the other subject cities, relative to the principal objects of commerce; since, in renewing the treaty, when Charles had returned to Pisa, they conceded the power to the Pisans, to work stuffs in silk, French wools, and dye with cochineal‡, which proves that it was forbidden to all the cities subject to the Florentine republic. The decision upon the fate of Pisa was retarded by various parties of the courtiers of Charles, whose greediness

\* Fabb. Vita Cosmi, note 3.

† Ammir. Ist. lib. 18. Decree of the Florentines of the year 1413, in which exemptions are made in favour of foreigners, who wish to inhabit Pisa; ann. 1421; great privileges are conceded to the German nation, and a house where even those could take refuge, who had committed any crime.

‡ Amm. Ist. Fior. lib. 26.

drew no small sums of money from both cities, and from the hopes some officers entertained of remaining in the government of them.

Every thing was tried in vain by the Florentines. In vain, too, Savonarola himself, who, after the expulsion of the Medicis, had become an important person in the government, with that insolence which apostolic zeal thinks sometimes allowable, ordered him upon meeting with him at Poggibonsi, to fulfil his promises. The king, from a religious reverence towards this man, was not only not angry at his rebukes, but even caressing him, desired to have him with him. But friar Jerome, after having accompanied him to Castelfiorentino, returned to Florence, whilst the king arrived at Pisa by the Vale of Elsa, (*Val d' Elsa*\*)

The Pisans evinced the greatest abhorrence at returning under the Florentine dominion. The whole populace, the women, the children, hastening in crowds before the king, making lamentations and howlings, reminded him of the promise he had made them†, and deplored their wretched fate; the nobility, the officers, the very soldiers, entreated so earnestly, that the latter threatened even with death whoever interested himself for the Florentines. Nor were good political motives wanting. They were near to a dangerous affair with the allies. Pisa, Sarzana, Pietra Santa, would have been excellent posts for a retreat, in case of accident, and Leghorn an admirable harbour, whence to command the coast of Italy, which the protection of Naples demanded.

The Florentines, therefore, were fed with hopes of restitution when the king should arrive in Asti‡, who,

\* Amm. loc. cit. Nardi, Ist. Fior. lib. 2. † Comines, chap. 26.

‡ Amm. loc. cit.

leaving Entragues in charge of the citadel of Pisa, advanced into Lombardy, where a powerful army of the alliance was preparing to make him pay dear for his invasion of Italy. The troops of Charles passed through the Lunigiana, and, contrary to the faith he had given, sacked and cruelly burnt Pontremoli; whence, passing over the Apennines, it found itself upon the Taro, in face of the enemy. Various errors were committed by both sides. The king, to whom speed was of importance, had inopportunately tarried six days in Sienna\*, and had given time to the enemy's army to unite, which was hardly done completely at the arrival of the French. In the passage through the Apennines, the rear-guard had quitted the body of the army about thirty miles, and arriving at Fornuovo, near the enemy, might have been easily routed; and this blow given to a small army, would have probably decided the whole, if the inopportune prudence of the general had not forbidden battle, until the forces were completely joined†.

The two armies were separated by the Taro. This piece of water, which is rather a torrent than a river, descends from the mountains of Liguria, and is shut in by two chains of hills, which, widening in the plain, present the picture of a vast circle, agreeable to the eye, from the upper mountains. This was the theatre of action‡.

However historians may differ upon the number of the combatants, all agree upon the great disproportion, and superiority in that of the alliance§. Various treaties

\* Comines, chap. 23.

† Jovius His. lib. 2.

‡ Oricell. de Bello Ital.

§ Comines frequently repeats, that the troops of the king did not exceed 9,000 men, nor does any writer make them amount to more than 12 or 15,000. The same author says, that the army of the alliance was 40, or at least 35,000, and it is not difficult to prove,



preceded the battle. The king, who saw himself in danger of being defeated and taken, asked for a simple passage. The accustomed caution of the Venetian purveyors, who were in the army, would have led them to consent; but the dread of dishonour in having, with so superior a force, suffered the enemy to pass unmolested; the ardour evinced by some for battle, by others the desire of booty, caused the conditions to be rejected. On the 6th of July the memorable battle of the Taro took place, the particulars of which are as much varied by writers, as the undecided issue, the victory being given to both armies. It is true that, with the exception of the Venetian authors, all other impartial historians give it to the French; and indeed, if the victory belongs to him who obtains his end, it cannot be doubted that the French enjoyed it, who, after a sanguinary action, followed their march without being molested. The French discipline prevailed over Italian numbers: the former closed and united upon the bank of the river, easily routed the disorderly squadrons of the latter. The sacking of the baggage, which was purposely exposed by the French, by enticing the avidity of the allies, threw them into disorder, and was one of the principal causes of the defeat. About 4,000 were killed on the part of the alliance, and 1,000 on the side of the French. The Italian soldiery, accustomed to fight in confusion, and without keeping a firm footing in their ranks, were not

that it must have been about that number. Leaving aside many others, Marino Sanuto, a writer who is very partial to the Venetians, says they alone had 20,000 men, without reckoning those of the Duke of Milan. Afterwards, in the month of August, he says that the two armies joined around Novara amounted to 30,000, without those who were killed in battle, and others who returned home; hence the number mentioned appears very probable.

able to resist the close and steady order with which the enemy fought. So sanguinary a battle had not taken place in Italy for a long time. The king ran the risk of being killed or taken; fought with the courage of a private soldier; and owed the victory in great measure to his own valour\*. The Venetians, having taken a part of the king's baggage, boasted of the victory, and as a sword and helmet of the king were found amongst it, they hung them up as trophies in a public square†. Great festivals were made in Venice, and elsewhere, to give *eclat* to the reputation of their arms‡.

The only advantage the French derived from this victory, was the safe retreat through Italy. All the enterprises they undertook elsewhere turned out unsuccessful. Flattered by their favourites to take possession of the Genovesato, they occupied Rapallo, when a fleet of eight galleys and two boats coming out of Genoa, landed

\* Rucellai says that he was slightly wounded, but Comines, who fought near the king, does not say so. Ariosto, amongst the other events which he has made Merlino guess and depict, has put this battle, canto 33, st. 31.

Ecco, dicea, si pente Lodovico  
D'aver fatto in Italia venir Carlo,  
Che sol per travaglia l'emulo antico  
Chiamuto ve l'avea, non par cacciarlo;  
E se gle scopre al ritornar nemico  
Co' Veneziani in Lega, e vuol pigliarlo  
Ecco la lancia il re animoso abbassa.  
Aprè la strada, e lor malgrado passa.

† Marin. Sanuto Cronaca Venet. Rer. Ital. tom. 24.—Baggage were taken: . . . his sword, helmet, and they were placed amongst the provisions of the most excellent council of ten, and are to be seen to this day.

‡ See Guicciar. Ist. lib. 2. Oricellar. de Bello Ital. Marin. Sanuto, loc. cit. Amongst the booty, Alexander Benedetti says a book was found, containing the portraits of all the women the king had fallen in love with in Italy.

seven hundred infantry, and the French troops were taken prisoners. The same fleet encountered the French fleet, and took the greater part of it\*. In the kingdom of Naples, too, events had taken place, which had greatly changed the aspect of affairs. The insolence of the French had excited universal hatred. The young Ferdinand had been joyfully received every where: no small body of his favourites had joined the succour arriving from Spain, under the command of Consalvo of Cordova, upon whom, on account of the celebrity he had acquired in the wars against the Moors, Spanish pomposity had conferred the name of great captain, which he fully confirmed by his glorious enterprises in Italy. Their raw troops, however, at first ill sustained the disciplined valour of the French. Ferdinand and Consalvo were defeated by the French general Obigny, at Seminara. Ferdinand, falling from his horse, ran the risk of being either taken or killed, when his faithful friend, John Altavilla, brother of the Duke of Termini, with a rare example, made him mount his own; whilst remaining on foot himself, he was almost immediately slain†. Ferdinand and Consalvo saved themselves by flight. This misfortune disheartened not the generous young man; he took shelter at Messina, knowing the discontent and readiness for rebellion which prevailed amongst the Neapolitans. Collecting a number of vessels, he presented himself before Naples, where, however, from dread of the French, no movement took place. Ferdinand had few troops in his fleet; nevertheless, in order to draw the French out of Naples, he approached with the intention of disembarking at the Madalena. Montpensier came out with the greater part of

\* Jovi Hist. lib. 3. † Jovi Hist. lib. 3. Guicciar. lib. 2.

the troops, thinking he would be obliged to fight an army: but hardly was he come out when all the alarm bells rang, and the city in arms shouted out loudly the name of Ferdinand. The French general, panic-struck, not daring to remain between the city and the enemy, who was ready to descend, and thinking his force very numerous, retired, making a long and fatiguing march to pass through the other gate. In the mean time Ferdinand remained in Naples, amidst the greatest demonstrations of rejoicing, and fortified himself on the side of Castello Nuovo, whence he foresaw the attack of the French would be made. The attack was made in vain, and Montpensier was obliged to shut himself up with his troops in the castle. The greater part of the towns and the kingdom, where there was no French garrison, followed the example of the capital\*.

King Charles having opened himself a road by the sword, arrived in Asti. The Florentines, according to the convention, waited the fulfilment of the promises made them; but new difficulties arose at every moment. They omitted not, however, waging warfare with the Pisans: various castles and places were recovered by the Florentines, and amongst the rest Pontedera†; when Nicholas Alamanni suddenly arrived with orders from the king, that Leghorn and Pisa should be restored to the Florentines, according to the conventions established at Turin: a condescension to which the king had submitted by the new alliance made with the Florentines; and through fear that Pisa might fall into the hands of his enemies, the Venetians, to whom the Pisans themselves were inclined to submit, or to the Duke of

\* Guicciard. Jovius loc. cit.

† Nardi Ist. lib. 2. Amm. Ist. lib. 26.

Milan, who had sent two of his leaders, Malvezzo and Francossa, in their support. Leghorn was immediately surrendered; Pisa, however, nor the other fortresses were not. Entragues found pretexts for delay: afterwards feigned a condescension in order to draw money from the Florentines, and invited them to approach Pisa on one side, upon which, the Pisans having built a bastion, he thought they might be easily driven from it. Approaching the bastion, therefore, with the troops they held at Ponsacco, and with those of Vitelli, who were induced by money to act in concert with them, they assaulted it with so much vigour, that they soon became masters of it, and following up, with the same ardour, would have taken the city, if they had not been impeded by Entragues, who, treacherously, ordered the Florentines to be fired upon from the fortress\*. The latter loudly complained of it to the ministers of the king, and the king himself; who, although he sent repeated orders to Entragues to give up the citadel, was never obeyed; the avidity of gold he drew from the Pisans, or rather the passion by which he was said to be blinded, for a young Pisan, named Lante†, having a stronger influence over him than his duty, since he would have been able to draw a greater sum from the Florentines; wherefore he consigned the fortress to the Pisans for 12,000 dollars only, which they immediately dismantled, by advice of Entragues himself. To this treachery was added that of the sale of Sarzana, which was made through his means by the Bastard of Bienne to the Genoese, and soon after Sarzanello, then Pietra Santa,

\* Nardi Ist. lib. 2. Amm. Ist. lib. 26. Jov. Hist. lib. 3.

† Nardi Ist. lib. 2. Guicciard. lib. 3.

and Mutrone, to the Lucchese\*, without paying any attention to the orders of the king, brought by Robert Veste.

The Florentines, after the useless loss of so much money, either paid to the king, or extorted by his ministers, found themselves deprived of the most important part of their dominions, and obliged to maintain an expensive war with an enemy raging with ancient animosity, who would have been succoured by many Italian powers, and particularly by the Venetians and the Duke of Milan. The latter, according to his ancient custom, represented two parts, that of counsellor at once of the Pisans and Florentines, who, however, knowing him of old, played the same game with him. Reduced to their own forces, they renewed hostilities, and regained Vada. Various little actions, which it is not necessary to detail,

took place between the Pisans and Florentines, <sup>1496.</sup> who continued to act offensively; when the aids arriving to the former from the Venetians, reduced the Florentines to act on the defensive. They were commanded by Hercules Bentivoglio, who took up a strong position near Pontedera.

The King of France, violating agreements, had neither restored Pisa nor the fortresses to the Florentines, his most constant friends, when he could have done so; nor was he longer able to do so when he wished it. Knowing, however, their fidelity towards him, he tried all means to preserve them as friends, whilst he had the

\* Nardi, lib. 2. Amm. lib. 27. Jov. Hist. lib. 3. Guic. lib. 3., who assures that the money for the citadel of Pisa was paid by the Venetians, the Duke of Milan, the Genoese, and Lucchese. Giovio adds that in order to get money, the Pisan ladies gave all their jewels, rings, buckles, &c., in pawn to the Lucchese.—Ist. lib. 3.

remainder of Italy for his enemy, and had almost entirely lost the kingdom of Naples. Unable by actions, he wished, at least, by the honour of a splendid embassy, to heal, in some measure, their sore disposition, by sending the Archbishop of Aix to reside at Florence, as his ambassador; and who, being solemnly received in the saloon by the magistrates, gave the most flattering words in recompense for the gold, which had been uselessly squandered. It was necessary to be content with the payment in an imaginary coin, which artful politicians know how to spend at a proper season\*. The Pisans, instead of vain words, received real assistance. Besides the troops of Sforza, eight hundred Greek or Albanese soldiers arrived on the part of the Venetians. These troops were rather greedy than brave, who, carrying on warfare with inhumanity, taught the same to both sides, who were only too much animated by ancient rivalry; frequent examples of barbarity consequently occurred during this war. The Venetians added thereto six galleys, which scoured the shore. The Pisans received also from Maximilian, King of the Romans, four hundred Germans, and two hundred Burgundian horse†, and the war was, therefore, carried on with injury to the Florentines.

Besides the real assistance he had given the Pisans, Cesar sent two ambassadors to Florence, who, in a tone rather of threat than of entreaty, exhorted the Florentines to give peace to Italy, by joining the alliance; and that, by separating themselves from the French, they should leave to his decision their differences with the Pisans. The reply of the Florentines was respectful but firm: that at the first news of his Majesty's coming to Italy, they

\* *Amm. lib. 27.*      † *Nardi, lib. 2. Amm. lib. 27.*

had elected two ambassadors as their duty demanded; that these were charged with their sentiments and justifications; and they hoped he would be satisfied with them\*. Fresh aids were continually arriving at Pisa, particularly from the Venetians, who, together with the Duke of Milan, entertained views upon it. It was most essential for a maritime power like Venice, to obtain an establishment in the Tuscan sea: the designs of the latter were always unbounded, but the pretensions made probably by both caused their designs to fail. The Florentines stood upon the defensive, but lost various castles. The minute details of these little wars and disorderly skirmishes cannot prove interesting to the reader at this remote period. The attempt alone made by the Florentines to recover Sarzana, deserves to be mentioned as an interesting event, from the death of Peter, or Piero Capponi, the same whose intrepidity before the king and his officers, had saved the honour and the liberty of Florence. Whilst acting as commissary of the republic, and animating the soldiers to the attack with all possible ardour, he was struck by a passvolant in the head, killed on the spot, and thus that enterprise failed†. Florence, mother of the fine arts, could not suffer such a citizen to be without a public monument, in testimony of her gratitude towards him. No family has given the Florentine republic so many virtuous citizens as that of Capponi. Amongst many others that could be mentioned, three shine particularly conspicuous, Gino, Neri, and Piero, equals to whom are not to be found in their age. Animated by a true and disinterested love of their country, they served her usefully with the ardour of im-

\* Nardi, lib. 2. Ammir. lib. 27.

† Guicciar, lib. 3. Nardi, lib. 2. Ammir., lib. 27.



passioned patriots in the most difficult circumstances ; and this merit makes them superior to the Albizzi, the Donati and even the Medicis, who loved themselves more than their country, because as their aim was only to surpass others, they often plunged the republic into the most sanguinary discords, in which we never find the name of the illustrious personages we have mentioned, although they possessed popularity and genius sufficient to gain themselves a party. It becomes the duty of the impartial historian to assign to each his post ; to place humble and modest virtue in its true light ; which is frequently eclipsed before weak eyes by the false splendour which surrounds successful ambition.

The fear of the Florentines was now increasing at the approach of the emperor, who had not very honourably received their ambassadors. He came from Genoa to Pisa, accompanied with so few troops, that he carried with him the air rather of a common leader, than of an emperor. He endeavoured to occupy Leghorn, which city, however, was well supplied with troops, and the imperial force was discomfited on its approach by a sortie made by the garrison : being straitened, however, by superior forces by land, and blocked up by the Venetian and imperial ships, she was not able to offer a long resistance.

Great troubles existed in Florence, where the scourge of famine added to the political misfortunes which harassed both the city and district. The pious and charitable Florentines would not allow (as has sometimes been practised with perhaps a necessary cruelty,) that the entrance into the city should be denied the wretched ; great crowds of the latter, therefore, wandered about her streets, receiving copious alms from the wealthy citizens. Gold, however, cannot supply the total failure of provi-

sions; and the churches, the streets and hospitals, presented the horrid spectacle of numbers expiring from famine\*. The credulous people, however, who formed the greatest part of the city, were animated by the ardent discourses held by Savonarola, who promised the infallible aid of heaven. Fortune appears to have conspired with his words to make him believed a prophet.

Some time since, troops had been demanded from the King of France, and commission given to the Florentine ambassadors to purchase grain. The hope of obtaining both these succours, was now vanishing. The fleet which was conveying them, in approaching the Tuscan coast, was overtaken by a storm, and obliged to return to Provence, where it is commonly believed he disarmed them. Leghorn, moreover, the only gate for the introduction of provisions, being almost blockaded by the enemies' force, every succour appeared impossible; when the French fleet composed of six ships, two galleys, and a larger Normandian ship suddenly appeared in sight, and with one favourable gale of wind, entered Leghorn, in face of the enemy's fleet, with the loss of an only galleon, loaded with grain. Six hundred infantry and fifty men of arms disembarked with considerable provisions. This succour gave great courage to the besieged. The enemy, however, continued to besiege Leghorn, but with no great success, from the little concord which prevailed amongst the chiefs, and impeded at times by the torrents of rain, which usually fall in the month of November. A furious tempest, finally, so completely destroyed the fleet of the alliance, that three ships were driven on shore. The galleon, laden with grain, was retaken, and many prisoners were made. This accident

\* Nardi Ist. lib. 2.

inspired the besieged with such courage, that, making sorties, they became always conquerors, and finally obliged the emperor to retire, not without having risked his life, a sleeve of his broad and pendent robe being torn away by a ball from a piece of artillery. After threatening Vico, Bientina, and other castles, he returned to Sarzana, with little advantage and less honour; but perceiving that the name, and imperial majesty disarmed, are not sufficient to conquer, he promised to return better provided\*.

This news arrived at Florence at a period when minds exalted by the spiritual fervour of Savonarola, were directed towards heaven, from whence they expected temporal aids. The courier, with the olive branch in his hand, in token of the best news, fell in with a numerous procession at the moment it was going to implore succour from heaven, and being stopped before he arrived at the palace, he was obliged to communicate the tidings he brought to the pious multitude. It is hardly possible to conceive how greatly this contributed to strengthen the party of the friar, and made him considered as a venerable prophet†. The Florentines, regaining courage, retook the greater part of the places they had lost; whilst

the troops of the alliance remained inactive from  
 1497. want of money and from disunion.

The Duke of Milan was become jealous of the Venetians, and thinking Pisa would be better in the hands of the Florentines, than of that powerful republic, which was his natural enemy, he favoured them. A treaty was therefore opened in Rome, with the principal heads of the alliance, to restore Pisa to the Florentines, but the Venetians opposing it, their authority had such weight,

\* Nardi, lib. 2. Amm., lib. 27.

† Nardi, lib. 2°

that the treaty was broken off\*. Nay, in order to increase the difficulties, and the embarrassments of the Florentines, they gave courage and sent succour to Piero or Peter de Medicis, who, after wandering an exile for more than two years, was aspiring only to return to his native land, and regain his pristine power. Little more than a year back, with the aid of Orsini, he had made a useless attempt by attacking the Florentines in the Valdichiana, whilst they were occupied at Pisa. Piero's views upon Cortona, where he had adherents, vanished, and disciplined troops being sent thither by the Florentines, obliged those of Orsini and Piero to retreat precipitately.

Nor had his brother Julian been more successful, who had gone to Bologna, in order to excite Bentivoglio and the Countess Riario†. Piero renewed his attempts this year with greater energy and hope. Circumstances favoured him. The misfortunes attendant upon the republic, the miseries, the famine, to which so many people, whom the opulence of the Medicis was wont to feed, were exposed, had increased the desire for their return. The republic was divided into two factions; the greatest followed the political dogmas of Savonarola, and was called the sect of the mourners (*piagnoni*), because the religious authority of the friar had accustomed them to deplore worldly pleasures and vanities; the other of the enraged (*arrabbiati*) from their discontent at having lost the will of the government, who were also called bad companions (*compagnacci*), because they followed not the rigid maxims of life held out by the friar, and liked pleasure better. A third is also made mention of, called the grey (*bigi*), which was most closely attached to the

\* Guicc. Ist. lib. 3. Ammir. lib. 27. Nardi, lib. 2.

† Ammir. Ist. lib. 26. 27.

Medicis\*. The latter sect, however, kept itself concealed, and openly followed the Piagnoni, whom they saw more powerful. The apparent moderation displayed by the sect of the *Bigi*, made it increase in favour and power, and various individuals thereof were admitted into the first employments. Amongst the rest, Bernard Nero, a partisan of the Medicis had been created gonfaloniere. Piero considered this circumstance very opportune to attempt a new blow. Favoured by the Duke of Milan, and the Siennese, and having concerted with his favourers that a clamour should be raised in Florence upon his arrival, he left Sienna for Florence, with 800 horse and 3,000 infantry, and was at S. Gaggio on the morning of the 28th April, near the gate S. Piergattolini. Going down to the fountains (*alle Fonti*), he placed himself behind them to avoid the blows of Culverin, that were drawn from the tower of the gate itself which was already closed. Here he waited for some hours that his friends in the city might raise a clamour, and open the gate to him; but the ruling party, hearing of his arrival some hours before†, had made the necessary dispositions for defence, which the friends of Piero seeing, ventured not to stir. Piero, therefore, after a long and useless delay, considered his retreat necessary, in order that it might not afterwards be prevented by a body of troops, who, being posted towards Pisa, could, coming by

\* Nerli, Comm. lib. 4.

† The fact is variously related: the most natural manner is Nardi's, that Piero was obliged by a torrent of rain to remain two hours at Tavernille, where his people refreshed themselves. He cautiously caused all travellers to be detained, that they might not carry the news to the city; but a countryman, sent back by the horse troops who preceded him, took the shortest road, arrived at Florence, and gave account of it. Nardi Ist. lib. 2. Guicciardini makes the troops of Peter or Piero not more than 600 horse and 400 infantry. Ammirato makes the number we have described.

the Val d'Elsa, cut off his road. Thus triumphed the sect of the Piagnoni, and the title of prophet was confirmed upon Savonarola\*.

The city was filled with suspicions of the old faction, as it appeared not probable that Piero could have approached Florence, and waited so long, without having good intelligence in the city. A conspiracy had been really formed in his favour by many of the principal citizens, amongst whom was the gonfaloniere himself, elected probably by the intrigues of the same party, which, accustomed to have the government exclusively in their own hands, by means of the influence of the Medicis, looked upon a democracy with an evil eye, which would have immersed it in obscurity. But the conspirators, disconcerted at seeing the enterprise discovered before the arrival of Piero, and at the measures of strong defense which were taken by the government, remained tranquil. Some time passed before the suspicions could be verified, nor would the conspiracy probably have been unveiled, had not Lambert Antella, who, as an outlaw and an adherent to the Medicis, wished to return to Florence upon any condition, arrived with the intention of making known the treaty. Being arrested and brought into the city, he justified his intention in a letter which was found upon him, written to Gualterotti, one of the ten, wherein he advised him that he was under the ne-

\* Ammir. lib. 27. Nardi, lib. 2. The latter relates, that when Piero was near Florence, and the city consequently in tumult, Benivieni, being sent by one of the nobility to Savonarola, told him, in dread, that the enemy were approaching, and that the friar, who was reading, raising his head with a smile, answered him, as Jesus to the prince of the apostles: "*Modicæ fidei, quare dubitasti?*" Do you not know the Lord is with you? It may be that his persuasion was such; but it is not impossible that as head of the party he was already informed of the strong precautions that had been taken.

cessity of having a secret conference with him upon affairs appertaining to the republic. He revealed the design; and twenty citizens were chosen to hear the examinations of the accused. After the report made by these, an extraordinary council of one hundred and sixty citizens, taken from the first offices of the state, was convened; which council, after having examined the depositions and proofs, declared the principal culprits to be Bernard Nero, for not having revealed the treaty, (who was proved to have been privy thereto in the time of his being gonfaloniere), Lorenzo Tornabuoni, John Cambi, Giannozzo Pucci, and Nicholas Ridolphi, for having conspired to bring back the Medicis to Florence. These persons were all condemned to death: but, having appealed to the general council, by which, according to the last reformation, the sentence was to be confirmed; the ruling party dreaded that, in so numerous an assembly the culprits would be saved by the favour shewn to, or the urgent entreaties made by, the relations. They obtained, therefore, that deliberations should be held in a new assembly, or meeting of counsellors chosen, the greater part at least, from their faction, whether the law of appeal could be suspended, in order to prevent seditions; asserting, says Guicciardini, that *the same laws concede, that, in order to avoid tumults, the laws may be dispensed with in a similar case\**; “*che le leggi medesime concedono, che per fuggire i tumulti possono essere le leggi in caso simile dispensate*,” a dangerous and unjust maxim, which if necessity has sometimes caused to be admitted, the circumstances which justify it recur scarcely once in a century. This was not the present case, and the motives or pretexts appear frivolous; since in that govern-

\* Guicciard. Ist. lib. 3.

ment the influence of parents and friends was always to be dreaded: consequently, either the law was defective, or ought to have covered all equally. The violation became even more unjust since it had been proposed by the party who wished to violate it; and more cruel, because it treated of the life of the citizens.

The contentions which arose upon this appeal were very great. The most impartial maintained that the law could not be violated. The agitation of the council, too, was become excessive. The members thereof were guilty of the most scandalous indecorum, and were about to come to blows; when the gonfaloniere, seeing the tumult, proposed the execution of the sentence, but protested that the laws were violated. The condemnation was approved, and the conquering party, dreading any delay, caused the sentence to be carried into execution the same night, and the condemned were beheaded after midnight. Bernard Nero had passed his seventy-fifth year, and laid down his neck to the executioner with much indifference, saying they deprived him of but very little. They all died with courage. Some, having fled, were declared rebels, others sent to the confines, or banished\*.

This execution encreased the enmities the two parties bore to each other, and concentrated, as it were, upon the friar, the rays of anger of a faction, which was now either to render him still more illustrious, or to destroy him†. In the impetuous declamations he made

\* Nardi, lib. 2. Guicci., lib. 3. Ammir., lib. 27. Nerli., lib. 4.

† It is a miserable and puerile compensation to wish to persuade us, in order to defend the friar, that this affair was probably unknown to him until after the execution of the sentence. The business was agitated, for a long time, with so much clamour, that it was known even out of Florence: and urgent entreaties in favour of the accused were brought even from Rome. Savonarola, moreover, was the head



against vice, he had not spared the church, and an expression had escaped his lips, that the church of God stood in need of reformation. These words being reported, and probably exaggerated, to the pontiff, whose conscience (although he never knew remorse,) suffered only too true a reproach from the words made use of by the friar, excited against the latter a more terrible party, and made him perceive how dangerous an office was that of reformer of the clergy. The pope had frequently complained to the signiory of Florence of the proceedings of this rash preacher, who dared even to lay his hand upon the sanctuary: he demanded of the Florentines to give him up, and threatened them with excommunication. But in the letters of reply, made by the government, we perceive only the determined firmness of the latter to support the friar\*.

The pope thus seeing the dread of ecclesiastical punishments without effect in a fanatic people, threatened them with more serious evils, viz., the exile of the Florentine merchants from Rome, and the confiscation of their effects. The Florentine avidity was roused at this threat, and the signiory prevailed upon the friar for a time to abstain from preaching; while Friar Domenico of Pescia mounted the pulpit in his stead, who more fanatic, because he was more simple in his way of life, repeated,

of a faction; the business was one of the most important; the conscience was concerned in it; and in these cases exactly, say his apolo-  
gists, was he consulted. No sensible man will admit this ignorance, leaving aside the authority of Anton M. Graziani, Bishop of Amelia, who assures us that the relations of the culprits went down on their knees before Savonarola to obtain the appeal *De casibus viror. illus.* Cerretani (manuscript history) says, "It was reported that Friar Jerome had sent to the magistrate to say that God wished justice to be done."

\* They are found in the Archive of the reformations.

and added to, the declamations made use of by Friar Jerome. The latter, however, knowing the power of Rome, endeavoured to dissipate the storm in a humble letter he wrote to the pope, wherein, if he had erred in word or deed, he offered his readiness to correct himself at any nod given by the pontiff\*. It would have appeared that, the pope, in answer, should have paternally admonished him: but it is a maxim of factions never to descend to particular details, when they wish to oppress any one.

In the mean time the theological and political doctrine of the two Dominicans excited the most formidable convulsions in the devout factious, who, blinded by fanaticism, not distinguishing the limits of decency, in which even devotion ought to confine itself, put in practice ridiculous means, and sacred farces with which they attempted to edify or to divert the people during the carnival of Florence. Thus, at their instigation, a numerous flock of children, appointing deputies for every quarter, went in humility and devotion to all the houses, asking for the *anatheme*, or all that was profane, such as obscene pictures, and immodest books, which were freely granted them: whilst the devout female sex, yielding humbly to those innocent preachers, suffered themselves to be despoiled of the dearest ornaments to the feminine world, of their false locks, and other decorations of the head, Levant handkerchiefs, washes and paints, odours, and of every thing that female industry has been able to invent, in order to increase or to give a false appearance of beauty. Nor did the anathema

\* “Dignetur, sanctitas vestra, mihi communicare quod ex omnibus quæ dixi et scripsi sit revocandum, et ego id libentissime faciam, nam hac vice et semper sicut dixi, et etiam scripsi et omnia mea dicta subjicio correctioni S. R. E. et S. V.

stop here : but draught boards, chess boards, playing cards, harps, lutes, and a hundred other means of innocent recreation were confiscated under the same title. On the last day, however, of the carnival, after having heard mass, clothed in white, carrying on their head, garlands of olive, and red crosses in their hands, they proceeded, singing psalms, to the square of the signiors, *Piazza dei Signori*, where a pyramidical scaffold had been erected, upon which those instruments of pleasure and profane luxury were deposited. The children got upon the rostrum of the square of the signiors, and after having sung spiritual hymns, the four deputies came down with lighted torches, and set fire to the pile which was consumed amidst voices of joy and the sound of trumpets\*. The populace are fond of spectacle and novelty, and were perhaps more delighted by this comic representation, than by the customary tedious course of the masks. In the time of the carnival, too, Father Jerome disdained not the dance: the war word, as it were, made use of by his followers to recognise each other, was *Viva Cristo*. Having collected his warmest partisans, therefore, in the carnival in St. Mark's, crying out *Viva Cristo*, Father Jerome made them leave the church for the square, in company with the friars. They took each other by the hand, and forming an ample circular chain, alternately a priest and a secular, they shouted with loud enthusiastic voices *Viva Cristo*, danced and leaped, and strangely asserted it was a delightful and holy cause to grow mad for Christ†. And as dancing songs were the fashion of those times, such were composed by Jerome Benevieni, one of the warmest partisans of the friar, and the best

\* Nardi Ist., lib. 2. Nerli Comm., lib. 4.

† Nardi, lib. 2. Nerli Comm., lib. 4.

poets of that age, who chose to demean his muse so far as to make use of the most extravagant ideas and expressions\*.

\* The following is an example of these verses :

Non fu mai piu bel sollazzo,  
 Più giocondo, ne maggiore,  
 Che per zelo e per amore  
 Di Gesù divenir pazzo.  
 Sempre cerca, onora ed ama  
 Quel che il savio ha in odio tanto,  
 Povertà, dolori e pianto  
 Il Cristian, perch' egli è pazzo.  
 Non fu mai, &c.

There never was a finer solace, one more gay, or one greater, than to grow mad through zeal for, and love of, Christ. The christian is always in search of, honours and loves what the wise man bears in hatred, poverty, pains, and tears, because he is mad.

There never was, &c. ;  
 and finishes thus,

Ognun gridi com' io grido  
 Sempre pazzo, pazzo, pazzo.

Let every one cry as I cry always Mad, mad, mad.

It is strange that neither the poet nor the devout should perceive the double meaning which such verses might take, and that even a libertine might sing them with complacency. The following is no less singular :

Io vo' darti, anima mia  
 Un rimedio sol che vale  
 Quanto ogni altro a ciascun male  
 Che si chiama la pazzia.  
 To 'tre oncie almen di speme  
 Tre di fede, e sei d' amore  
 Due di pianto, e poni insieme  
 Tutto al foco del timore.  
 Fa dipoi bollir tre ore  
 Premi infine e aggiunge tanto  
 D' umiltà dolor quanto  
 Basta a far questa pazzia .  
 Io vo' darli, &c.  
 O pazzia mal conosciuta  
 Da color che t' han per pazza, &c.

I wish to give thee, my soul, a remedy alone that is worth as much as any other to any evil which is called madness. Take three onces at least of hope, three of faith, and six of love, two of tears, and put them together all upon the fire of fear : Let them afterwards boil for three hours, press them together, and add as much of humility and grief as are sufficient to form this madness.

I wish to give thee, &c. &c.

But a man, whose celebrity and power consisted in preaching, could not remain long mute without his credit declining. In spite of the prohibitions of the pope, he suddenly recommenced preaching, and asserted that he was inspired by heaven. The enraged pontiff fulminated his excommunication against him, which, by a sacred contagion, was to be communicated to all who listened to him. John of Camerino, who was bringing the interdict to be published in Florence, halted at Sienna, and would not venture to proceed from fear of being murdered by the devout fanatics; nevertheless, by means of the enemies of the friar, the briefs were affixed in various parts of Florence. Friar Jerome now, laying aside all moderation, publicly asserted that unjust censures possessed no power. He declaimed, with all energy, against the scandalous life of the clergy, and maintained that the church stood in need of reform. And, in truth, Savonarola was not much in the wrong. Other men of genius, such as Dante and Petrarch, in their verses, had fulminated, more than the friar had done, against ecclesiastical dissoluteness: but if there ever was a time, in which such declamations could appear just, it was that of the reign of a pope, who, as well as his children in the Vatican, had surpassed, in excess, even those lusts of the flesh, which had dishonoured Tiberius\* in the dark recesses of Capri; and which were eclipsed too by the most atrocious crimes, the sword and poison

Not only the best Florentine poet, but even the greatest painter, Baccio della Porta, was reduced by the fanaticism of Savonarola to a degree as to abandon the art in which he was eminent, hearing him declaim against it as a seducing art; and in one of those devout fits he threw his paintings, drawings, and his whole study into the fire, and put on the habit of a Dominican, and assumed the name of Friar Bartholomew. Vasari, *Life of Friar Bart.*

\* See further on, under chapter III. note 50.

being made use of\*, either for purposes of private vengeance, or in order to acquire the riches left by the victims who were sacrificed.

All, therefore, who think the ecclesiastical gown, whatever individual wears it, ought to protect from all censure; in short, all superstitious imbeciles, were offended at the disobedience of Friar Jerome, and his party grew somewhat weaker. The priests, who were always dependant upon the court of Rome; the other rival religious orders, carrying with them a great number of the devout, began to declaim against his disobedience. Leonardo of the Medicis, vicar of the archbishop, forbade the clergy to attend the sermons of Friar Jerome, and commanded all the parishes to protest to their parishioners, that if they went to hear them, they should be rejected from confession and communion, as excommunicated persons, and as such deprived of the right of burial. All was in vain. The magistrates, partisans of the friar, decided that he should preach, and threatened the vicar Medicis with the penalty due to a rebel, if in two hours' time he did not lay down the office of vicar†. Nothing is better adapted than this fact to prove the power of the friar, and the enthusiasm the Florentines entertained for his cause, although somewhat diminished. The number of those who were still attached to him, was, indeed, very great, in whose hearts the devout works performed, and the austere life led, by

\* . . . . it is clear that it had been a frequent custom of the father (Alexander VI.) as well as his own (Valentino's) not only to use poison for revenge upon his enemy, or to assure himself of the death of the suspected, but also to rob rich persons of their property to satisfy his own abandoned cupidity.—Gucciardini, book 5.

† See à-propos Nardi Ist. lib. 2, who, as an ocular witness, speaks at length upon it.

a man like Friar Jerome, contrasted with the infamous character, and vulgar debaucheries of Alexander, were sufficient to turn the balance decidedly in favour of the former. Others too could remember the unjust interdicts issued by Sixtus IV, and the courage with which the city had despised them. Animated, therefore, both by zeal for the authority of Rome, and by envy at the celebrity enjoyed by the friar; at the consideration, the Dominican order had acquired through him, as well as by the party of the *Compagnacci* and *Arrabbiati*; rivals had sprung up in the Franciscan and Augustin orders, who fought, from the pulpits of the churches, Holy Cross (Santa Croce) and Holy Ghost, (Santo Spirito), with the two other holy antagonists, Friar Jerome and Friar Domenico. The concourse, at times, in one place, at times in another, became very great, and the enraged sects spared no insult even to the preachers themselves, by fighting in the streets, and Friar Jerome was even obliged, on his way from St. Mark's to the cathedral, to get himself escorted by an armed force. Two ranks of boys frequently fought with stones, the one to offend, the other to defend, the friar; and even men of mature age, returning to childhood, mixed in the affray. The pulpit, from which he was to preach, was found covered with dirt and ordure, and at one time with the skin of an ass. Sometimes too strange noises were made even with trumpets, in order to interrupt the preaching\*.

The ruin of the friar, however, began from the indiscretion made use of by his fanatic companion, Friar Domenico of Pescia. He had frequently the imprudence to assert from the pulpit, that the doctrine, taught by his master, as well as the prophecies which were in-

\* Nardi, lib. 2.

spired by heaven, were so true, that, if it were necessary, he would be ready to confirm them by going through fire. The superstitious trials, so improperly called judgments of God, were not yet wholly abolished by reason, and the memory of St. Peter Igneo was still alive, of whom it was related, that in the same city he passed through fire, in order to prove the simony of a bishop of Florence.

Friar Jerome, although he approved not the imprudent offer made by his companion, could not oppose it too strongly, in order not to diminish, in the other fanatics, the blind faith they had in him; and although he, too, denied not that he could, if it were necessary, recur to that proof, he appears, however, to have gently warned his companion of his imprudence\*. But where fanaticism exists, there can be no prudence. Friar Domenico frequently repeated the same offer, challenging the preachers of the contrary party to the trial. The hostile orders, especially that of the Holy Cross, after serious deliberation determined upon agreeing to the challenge, making cavillous reflections, and not despairing amidst so great a number of them, to find one simple and fanatic enough to accept it. And truly in the first moment of fanatic heat, Friar Francis of Puglia offered to make the trial; but cool reflection made him find pretexts to retract†. He was succeeded in the offer by Nicholas Philli, a Florentine; but even the ardour of this man was cooled by more mature consideration.

\* Nardi, however, says the challenge came from the preacher of the Holy Cross, Friar Francis, who boasted he would go in, if Jerome would follow him, but weighing the other circumstances, Nerli's detail appears more probable, although Nardi is followed in the diary of Burcardo.

† Nardi, lib. 2.



We must, however, seek for blind fanaticism where the greatest ignorance prevails, and in that class, to which one Friar Clement belonged, viz., amongst the lay brothers. Bartholomew Rondinelli\*, a friar, either less reflective or more fanatic, accepted the challenge, and persevered in the proposal. His constancy was so great that he went so far as to assert it was of little importance to him to die amongst the flames, in order that by consuming (as they were sure to do) his antagonist, the impositions practised by Friar Jerome might be unmasked†. Although a great many of the party of Savonarola, as his own partial historians assert‡, subscribed to expose themselves to the trial; the dangerous honour belonged to Friar Domenico, who was readily yielded to by his master. The magistrates, and other grave citizens held a council upon an experiment, so contrary to religion, to humanity and good sense; nor can we omit to mention the wise proposition made by John Canacci, a man of spirit, who told them that the same miracle might be obtained without the danger, by causing the two friars to go into a tub of tepid water, and that whoever came out dry would be the conqueror§.

The plurality of the council, however, consented to the experiment of fire; some of the wisest, probably, hoping, that by burning the two rivals in the flames,

\* This is the case of which Omar speaks to Mahomet. Voltaire *Tragédie le Fanatisme*, act. 2. sc. 6:

Tes autres favoris zélés avec prudence,  
Pour s'exposer à tout ont trop d'expérience  
Ils sont tous dans cet âge, ou la maturité  
Fait tomber le bandeau de la crédulité  
Il faut un cœur plus simple aveugle avec courage.

† Nerli Comm., lib. 4.

‡ Nardi, lib. 2.

§ Nerli Comm., lib. 4.

those dangerous disputes would be put an end to, which kept the city so greatly divided. Four deputies were elected to assist at it, two for each party: on the part of the friar, James Salviati and Alexander Acciajoli: on the contrary party, Piero Alberti and Benedetto Nerli. They ordered a scaffold to be prepared of large boards forty arms long, five broad, and two and a half high from the ground, which extended from the palace of the priors towards the house of the Pisans. This was covered with mortar of very large raw bricks to resist the fire. On the right and left the scaffold was covered with two rows or piles of dry wood of oak, brush, and other combustible matter, and in the middle alone a passage of the breadth of an arm was opened, through which the two factions expected to see their champions pass unhurt, like the three young Jews through the furnace of Babylon.

The experiment being fixed for the 17th April, the Saturday before Palm Sunday, an immense multitude attended from the country and the city, to witness the spectacle. The necessary precautions being taken to preserve good order, the square was barred, and the gates were shut at a fixed hour. The Franciscan friars were the first to appear, amongst whom was Bartholomew Rondinelli, without any retinue, and in profound silence, and were conducted to a box divided into two parts for the reception of the two orders. Then came the friars of St. Mark in ecclesiastical pomp. Friar Jerome, with a retinue, carried the sacrament in the tabernacle, and upon entering the square, chanted with a loud and awful voice, the little verse: *Exurgat Deus, et dissipentur inimici ejus*, &c. Friar Domenico was also adorned with a crucifix in his hand. Their numerous partisans accompanied them with torches, singing with

loud voice, and took the posts assigned to them. The public remained in the most anxious expectation, when difficulties were said to have arisen. The Franciscans, suspicious that Friar Domenico had some witchcraft upon him, which protected him from the flames, desired that he might take off his clothes and put on others, to which the friar consented. He then pretended, by the advice of Friar Jerome, that he ought to go into the flames, carrying with him the sacrament which his adversaries denied him, alleging the scandal which would arise amongst the Idiots, if they saw the body of Christ burning in this solemn trial. Savonarola had a great disadvantage in this trial. The courageous Friar Rondinelli had publicly asserted that he thought he should be burnt, but he sacrificed himself for the public good, since, by burning also the friar Domenico, the issue would be against the Dominicans, who pretended to prove by fire the truth of the prophecies of Savonarola. That he might remain victorious, it was necessary that Rondinelli should be burnt, and Friar Domenico remain unhurt, of which probably Friar Jerome himself was not well persuaded; whence it appears that, obliged by the imprudence of his companion, he proposed as a subterfuge, that Friar Dominico should carry the sacrament to prevent the execution, as in fact happened, or to prepare for himself a defence; since, if the holy wafer remained not untouched, how could the body of friar Domenico be otherwise? Probably Friar Jerome expected that, like the other two, Rondinelli, at the sight of the pile would be terrified at the hour of execution: but the intrepid fanatic deluded them. Obstinate at his determination not to enter the fire without the sacrament, when this condition was not necessary, and when his rival asked it not for himself, was the same thing as to

prevent the experiment taking place\*. After long disputes, which kept the people assembled the whole day, during a deluge of rain, the assemblage broke up without the experiment having been made.

A very numerous collection of people excited by the curiosity and expectation of seeing an extraordinary event, obliged to break up as it were deluded after a long and tedious waiting, easily conceives a high indignation at those who have prevented the effect of it being shewn. These were the Dominicans. Against them, therefore, and their devotees, the public voice was raised, and Friar Jerome was called an impostor. On his return to St. Mark's he was insulted to a degree that the sacrament he held in his hands was scarce sufficient to protect him. Upon his arrival there, he mounted the pulpit, and gave a short account in his own defence of what had happened, but in vain: many of his own partisans were sorry that the experiment had been prevented. His credit thus became much diminished. He made a pathetic sermon the following day, Palm Sunday, and as it were pre-saging his own imminent ruin, said he was ready to suffer death for his flock. But on a day when Friar Marian Ughi, one of his disciples, was preaching, a tumult was made in the church by his enemies; arms were resorted to; the gates of the convent were shut, which was attacked and defended by the two factions. The government, however, sending a public force thither, the tumult was appeased, and Friar Jerome, Friar Domenico, and Friar Silvester Maraffi were arrested.

Francis Valori, one of the principal citizens and most

\* Cambi, who lived at that time, says that, even before, the friars of St. Mark had endeavoured to prevent the experiment; but that their rivals refused, probably seeing that at the expense of one individual the advantage was all on their side.

zealous friends of the friar, had fled to his houses, around which, on the following day, the populace crowded in tumult, in hopes of sacking them. Valori saw his wife killed under his eyes by a pass-volant, which struck her on the head, whilst she was recommending herself to the mercy of the mob from the window : but being summoned by the signiory, he went intrepidly with the mace-bearers or beadles (*mazzieri*), but when arrived near St. Procolo, some of the relations of the latter, who had been condemned for conspiracy, attacked him, and Vincenzo Ridolfi, aiming a hatchet at his head, killed him. Valori was an excellent and virtuous man, a lover of his country, zealous for liberty, of austere manners, somewhat severe; compared by the Florentines to Cato, and unworthy of such an end\*. But the heat of factions acknowledges no justice.

In the mean time the magistrates served the friars with a process, and the pope sent commissaries to attend it. It is always difficult to come to the truth amidst a chaos of parties, where either blind fanaticism or bad faith alter and confound facts, and still more darken obscurities. It appears without doubt, that many irregularities were committed, as usually happens, when the hatred of a faction is pleased by any means to condemn a person who is disliked. The torments, and particularly the cord, which were made use of against the accused, made Friar Jerome frequently confess and contradict himself. It is not our duty to enter into a minute discussion of the process; and the many historians and apologists, who have written of him may be consulted†. After long and

\* Silvano Razzi, Life of Francis Valori.

† Nardi says the process was publicly read in the hall, but not before the culprits nor the magistracy. He adds that one of the great citizens, who had appeared at the process a great enemy of the friar,

repeated examinations, the three friars were condemned to death. Being degraded with the usual formalities, and consigned to the secular power, on the 23rd May, the vigil of the Ascension, they were hanged in that same place where the experiment of fire was to have taken place, to a pole ten arms high, thrown across the top of another piece of wood, by which a cross was represented: fire was afterwards set to a large pile of wood by which the pole was surrounded, their bodies were burnt, and the ashes thrown into the Arno.

They met their punishment with all possible constancy without retracting their sentiments, and Savonarola alone, in the act of being degraded, censured him, whose errors had separated him from the triumphant church. He was considered by one party as a seditious impostor; by another, a martyr. It is not easy to decide precisely what was his character. Let a few reflections suffice. It cannot be doubted that his life was pure, his manners unspotted, his precepts holy, but dictated by a rigour condemning even innocent pleasures; without which human society would become a

being in the country some time afterwards with the historian, confessed in presence of his wife, that, "from the process of Friar Jerome something had been taken away, and something added." Timothy Parigino, in the *Life of Savonarola* asserts that the process published was falsified and substituted for the true one, by one Cicconi a notary. Spizelio assures us that he received many elucidations of this falsification from Magliabecchi. Benedict Varchi relates in his history, that, in 1530, it was judged proper, through the counsel given by Lorenzo Ridolfi, that the process of Savonarola should be taken from the chamber, as made against every law of equity. Guicciardini asserts, too, that many thought that the confession which was published had been fabricated falsely, book 3. It is said, in the history of Cerretani, who lived in the times of these three friars: "In Friar Domenico they found nothing and thought of saving him, but the commissary of Pope Alexander said a friar more or less is of little importance. Let all three go."

mournful assemblage of cruel and ferocious individuals ; a rigour which, instead of assisting christian morality, is prejudicial to it, by rendering it too harsh and austere, and by continually representing a God of peace and meekness with the thunderbolt in his hand. In short, the indiscreet fervour evinced by this friar, transported him beyond those limits within which every virtue ought to be confined\*. He did wrong to meddle with political affairs, and to take so great a part therein, as if he had been one of the principal citizens, making himself even head of a party, which is highly improper for a priest. The experiment of fire is a very difficult measure to be defended by his apologists ; since, upon this occasion he appears not to have possessed that apostolic confidence which a person ought to have who thinks himself inspired by heaven, and who is certain of a miracle ; but a certain cavellous duplicity is seen through it. He was the promoter of the most extensive democracy, to which probably his eloquence, which ruled over the multitude, fondly inclined him†. He was also the most renowned

\* Dante, always full of accuracy in thought, notes as follows :

Ma quando il mal si torce ; e con più cura  
O con men che non dee, corre nel bene,  
Contra il fattore adopra sua fattura.

† If we were to attend to the opinion of writers who have spoken of this man, we shall find an equal number against and in favour of him, and amongst these, some very great men. We will be satisfied with mentioning a few of them for the variety of their opinions. Macchiavel speaks of him with the greatest esteem, *Disc. sopra Tit. Liv. lib. 1. cap. 11*, and this may be from policy. The others, for the sanctity of the life, are St. Francis de Paolo, who, twenty years after the death of Savonarola, makes a great eulogy upon him in a letter, saying it was revealed to him by God, that that holy man was oppressed by cabal and envy, and that his ashes performed miracles. The other is Philip Neri, under Paul IV., year 1558, who recommends the pope to canonize him. Catherine Ricci, and Domenica

preacher of his times. Reading his sermons, we discover the most eloquent passages, which animated by his voice, by the tears he shed ; by the idea the people had formed of him being a prophet, must have produced an admirable effect in the audience who frequently interrupted him with sobs. The frequent apostrophes and interrogations with which they abound, render the style very animated. His diction, where not obscured by scholastic mists, is very clear and simple ; and we hesitate not to assert that some of his sermons are preferable to the false eloquence made use of by many modern sacred orators, in whom the truths of the gospel, instead of being adorned with decent attire, are, on the contrary, disguised in a swollen and far-fetched style, wherein we discover the badly-tempered colours of poetry without the inspiration it ought to display\*. His devotees, and especially the Dominicans, transmitted to posterity a veneration for him which has continued down to our times†.

Paradiso, founder of the convent of the Crocetta, are two nuns, favourites of this friar, according to the testimony of Nerli, Commentaries. It is to be remarked, however, that in the edition printed with the date of Augsbourg, which is the only one I know of, in 1728, but probably of Florence, sister Catharine Ricci is found in the index ; but at page 76, quoted there, there is discovered a mark which indicates something wanting. In the two autograph manuscripts, however, in the Magliabecchian library, both the sisters are quoted in one of them, in the other, Catharine alone, called "the sister Ricci, who is said to be in St. Vincents at Prato." Amongst the admirers of Savonarola, was the celebrated poet, Flapinio, as is inferred from the following epigram :

*Dum fere flamma tuos, Hieronyme, pascitur artas,  
Religio sanctas dilaniata comas  
Flevit, et o dixit, crudeles parcete flammæ  
Parcite sunt isto viscera nostra rogo.*

\* They were collected by Ser Lorenzo Vivoli, from the words of the preacher, learnt by heart, and afterwards written.—Nerli, lib. 4.

† Until the middle of last century, what was called "the flowered,"



We must not omit that, on the same day on which Savonarola was arrested in Florence, Charles VIII. died of apoplexy, an event which both parties interpreted in their own favour: the enemies of the friar, that the prophecy of his return was proved false; his friends, that the threat made to him of the wrath of Heaven was verified, if he did not observe his faith with the Florentines. Many protestants could not fail to cover with eulogy a declaimer against the Roman clergy; and they particularly ought to consider him as a prophet, as he predicted a reformation, which has only proved true in their own church\*.

(*la fiorita*), was scattered in the square on the morning of the 23rd May, in the place where the friars were burnt, as is wont to be done in the churches upon the festival of any saint.

\* The prophecies of Friar Jerome were: "*Ecclesia Dei indiget reformatione et renovatione; Ecclesia Dei flagellabitur, et fidem ejus convertentur; Florentia flagellabitur, et post flagella renovabitur et prosperabit.*" To which Friar Dominico added: "*Quod excommunicatio facta de patre nostro Jeronimo, non tenet, non servantes eam non peccant.*" The writers upon this celebrated man are very numerous. After having consulted many, we have kept before us the *History of Nardi*, who, being contemporary, was witness to all his actions, and even his punishment. He, however, is his partisan: we have, therefore, endeavoured to oppose Nerli, his enemy, to him, thus keeping a middle road.

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## CHAPTER XI.

LOUIS XII. SUCCEEDS CHARLES VIII.—PAUL VITELLI CHOSEN GENERAL FOR THE SIEGE OF PISA.—RECALL OF VITELLI.—HE RETURNS TO PISA, AND LAYS SIEGE TO IT.—THE SIEGE IS RAISED.—VITELLI IS ARRESTED, BROUGHT TO FLORENCE, AND BEHEADED.—STATE OF ITALY.—DESCENT OF THE FRENCH UPON THE MILANESE.—FLIGHT OF THE MOOR.—ARRIVAL OF LOUIS XII. IN LOMBARDY.—RETURN OF THE MOOR, WHO, BETRAYED BY THE SWISS, IS GIVEN UP TO THE FRENCH, AND DIES IN A CASTLE.—PISA AGAIN LAID SIEGE TO, AND HER UNHAPPY END.—VALENTINO THREATENS THE FLORENTINE STATES.—THE FRENCH MARCH TO THE CONQUEST OF THE THRONE OF NAPLES.—SECRET ACCORD WITH THE SPANIARDS.—BLOTS IN THE CHARACTER OF CONSALVO.—RUIN OF THE HOUSE OF NAPLES.

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**T**HE death of Savonarola humbled for a time, although it destroyed not, his party. Insulted and reviled,  
1498. that party saw its rivals triumph, who, in the first moments, indeed, after the tragic catastrophe, obtained the principal honours of the government; but, nevertheless, when the party of Savonarola had regained its courage, it found itself more strong, because it was more numerous, and consequently regained its former influence. The same form of government was maintained, viz., the greater council, which was always equally numerous, and with the same authority: hence the enemies of Savonarola had only gained the pleasure of satisfying their rage, by the death

of the head of the contrary faction\*. The same seeds of discord therefore remained in Florence, and the Dominicans, inheriting the doctrines of their master, were considered for a long time as favourers of the democracy, and enemies of the house of Medicis. That catastrophe being over, and the tumults being appeased, a greater attention was again paid to public affairs.

In the mean time, however, important political events had taken place. The young Ferdinand, after regaining, by his valour, the throne of Naples, died, and was succeeded by his uncle Frederick. In this year, too, as we have already said, Charles, King of France, died without children, and was succeeded by the Duke of Orleans, under the name of Louis XII., the same, who being closely besieged by the troops of the alliance, and especially of the Duke of Milan, in Novara, escaped from it by the surrender of the city. He was the greatest enemy of the duke, having the same pretensions to the Milanese, as Charles to the Neapolitan throne; and the duke would hardly have suffered him to have escaped from his hands, could he have foreseen that this prince was to be the cause of his total ruin. And in order that his intentions might not be doubtful, he added to his other titles that of Duke of Milan, which prognosticated another imminent invasion of Italy†.

The Florentines were following up the war with Pisa. They had taken Paul Vitelli into their pay, with his troops. He was considered the best Italian general. He came upon the rostrum, to take away from the gonfaloniere the baton of command, getting, however, the astrologist to determine the propitious moment for it.

\* Nerli Comm. lib. 4.

† Nardi Ist. lib. 3.

In the mean time, the secretary of the republic, Marcellus Virgilio, passed an eulogy upon his conduct, in a flowery oration, interrupted at the nod of the astrologer, which indicated the happy point of an expedition, which was to terminate so unfortunately for the republic, and still more for the captain\*. He came to the Florentine army, which was encamped upon the Pisan territory, till then commanded by Count Ranuccio, and which had suffered considerable disadvantages. Vitelli united his forces at Pontedera, whence, attacking the enemy in various positions, he always came off conqueror, retaking Buti, Vico, and cutting in pieces, in a large skirmish, a band of Venetian Greek soldiers, with the capture of their leader, Franco, and the death of John Gradenigo. He then occupied the valley of Calci, and erected forts to intercept every succour that could arrive from Pisa†. But Pisa was powerfully succoured by the Venetians, who gave Guidubaldo, Duke of Urbino, the command of this enterprise with two hundred men of arms, and one hundred light horse, and recruited Charles Orsino and Bartholomew d'Alviano. They endeavoured to enter the Florentine states by the road of the Siennese, and demanded the passage from the republic. The Siennese were at variance. Pandolph Petrucci, therefore, who governed it, artfully detained these troops, and treating secretly with the Florentines, obtained advantages from them relative to Montepulciano, which was continually threatened: having finally agreed, they made a truce for five years, and denied the passage to the enemies of the Florentines‡. The Venetians now endeavoured to penetrate by Val di Lamone;

\* Nardi Ist. lib. 3. † Amm. Ist. lib. 27. Nardi Ist. lib. 3.

‡ Nardi, lib. 3. Amm. lib. 27. Malevolti Ist. de Sienna, lib. 6, of the 3rd part. Sanuto Cron. Ven.

but the fortress being bravely defended by Dionigi of Naldo, they were obliged to retreat. The enemy, driven back from hence, found the road open on the side of Sogliano, by Ramperto Malatesta, who was lord of it. Alviano, marching with great speed with a body of 2,000 men, preceded by a courier, who wore upon his garment the arms of the Florentine republic, arrived at Camaldoli; occupied that convent and Alvernia, feigning that his troops were Florentine; and sent to Bibbiena, under the same mask, saying that lodging was to be prepared for Giulio Vitelli. Those people fell into the snare, and received the enemy on the 15th of October, instead of their friends. The rapidity with which he had marched had made him leave behind him the greater part of his companions, and he arrived at Bibbiena with about one hundred horse: the necessary succours, however, followed him. He marched with the same celerity towards Poppi.

The news of this daring and rapid march put the Florentines in consternation; who were obliged to recall Paul Vitelli, and interrupt his prosperous successes in the Pisan war, where he had already made himself master of Librafatta. It was the intention of the enemy to succour Pisa with such a diversion. The arrival of Vitelli in the Casentino arrested the progress of the enemy, who, consumed by the little war, by the sagacity of the captain, was obliged to retreat from Poppi.

1499. They remained, however, in Bibbiena, but almost besieged. The Duke of Urbino was within that city, sick. He demanded a passport from Vitelli to depart, and it was granted him without the knowledge of the Florentine commissary. Julian de Medicis, who had attended the expedition, departed also with the duke: this facility, united with the supposed hardness shewn

by Vitelli in undertaking operations, (which was, however, nothing more than prudence and caution, not wishing to expose himself to a defeat from the enemy in their own homes,) excited the first suspicions of his loyalty\*.

In the actions of the Casentino we have described, a singular man distinguished himself, whom a wrong avocation had called to the cloister, but whose true one was the profession of arms. This was D. Basil Nardi, Abbot of St. Felix, in the square of Florence, afterwards vicar-general of the order of Camaldoli. But he managed the sword more readily than the breviary. Hearing that one part of the Casentino, and particularly Camaldoli, was occupied by the enemy, and fired with generous disdain, he presented himself to the Florentine magistrates, demanding forces to oppose him. The former, who knew his worth, willingly gave him the command of a body of good troops, with which, in those countries, the situation and difficult roads of which he was perfectly acquainted with, he frequently surprised and routed the enemy; and returning to Florence, after the retreat of the latter, the people came out to meet him, and received him in triumph. Upon other occasions he distinguished himself in favour of the Florentines, and Vasari has painted him in the great hall of the old palace armed, and dressed in the white habit of the order Camaldoli. The general of the

\* Amm. lib. 27. Nardi, lib. 3. Sanuto Cron. Ven. How indiscreet sometimes the opinion of governments upon their generals is, may appear in this case; whilst Vitelli was suspected by the Florentines, of having an understanding with the Venetians, the latter were diffident of the Duke of Urbino, thinking him of accord with the Florentines. Both acted with prudence, and in steep mountains covered with snow they could not work much.

order endeavoured to excuse his warlike disposition, and wrote a letter to Francis Piccolomini, Cardinal of Siena, protector of the order, to gain him his pardon, and to seek absolution for him, on account of the irregularities which he might have committed.

The Duke of Milan, from jealousy of the Venetians, who were his natural enemies, had assisted the Florentines, both by art and force, to regain Pisa, which city he dreaded only would fall into the hands of the Venetians. The latter were weary of a tedious war, and were seeking a prudent reason to extricate themselves from it. They, therefore, remitted, together with the Florentines, their contentions to the Duke of Ferrara, who went in haste to Venice, where John Baptist Ridolfi and Paul Anthony Soderini were sent as ambassadors from the Florentines. The duke, after various conferences, pronounced his decision; the principal articles of which were, that the Venetians were to withdraw their troops from Pisa and the remainder of Tuscany, leaving that city and all the castles under the dominion of the Florentines, as before the rebellion: the fortresses, however, were to remain in the hands of the Pisans, with soldiers who could give no suspicion to the Florentines: that the Pisans were to elect a foreign mayor, and that, whenever the captain of the Florentines pronounced a criminal sentence, this was to be approved by a successor named by the duke: the Florentines, moreover, were to pay the Venetians 180,000 dollars in twelve years, on account of the expenses of the war, with other conditions of minor importance\*. The house of Medicis was not even mentioned, which greatly offended Piero. Each party remained discon-

\* Sanuto, Cron. Ven., who somewhat varies these conditions from those mentioned by Nardi and Ammir.

tented, which is frequently a proof of justice and impartiality having been exercised. The Venetians caused the duke to hear of their displeasure\*. They, however, were in the wrong. Obligated, by excessive expenses and other circumstances, to abandon that enterprise, all was gain to them what they received from the Florentines. For the latter, too, the sum to be paid was not heavy, as they had so considerable a time to pay it in, whilst they secured to themselves the possession of Pisa.

This city had greater reason than all to be discontented, since she was finally placed under the dominion of her enemies. The Venetians, however, tacitly accepted Lodo, at least with the effect, because they withdrew the troops from the territory of the Pisans. The latter, highly irritated, although abandoned to themselves, determined to defend themselves with the most obstinate valour. It appeared, however, that they were destined soon to fall. Vitelli and Count Ranuccio, turning against Pisa, and closing upon Cascina, soon took it, and afterwards the tower of Foce, the fort of Stagno; when the Florentines, receiving an augmentation of force, finally laid siege to Pisa. Vitelli encamped on the 1st of August, on the left side of the Arno, which appears at that time, (at least according to Ammirato,) to have approached St. Anthony's, and afterwards went out of Pisa, at the gate and bridge into the sea: in the middle of this piece of wall, which touched with the two extremes of the Arno, stood the fortress called Stampace, adapted, with its artillery, to protect both sides†. Vitelli began with his artillery to batter the fort and wall at the same time; a large piece

\* Sanuto, loc. cit.

† Amm. Ist. lib. 27.



of which was thrown down between the fort and the seagate. The Florentine youth, on the morning of the 10th of August, attacking the fort with the greatest ardour conquered it, and at the same time took the church of St. Paul, at Ripa d'Arno\*.

These events terrified the defenders to a degree, that, thinking themselves lost, they took to flight on every side; and if Vitelli had seized so propitious an opportunity, by pushing forward his troops within it, it is the common opinion he would have taken it, the more so, as the wall falling towards the camp, and consequently from the lowest part, presented a slope, and facilitated the ascent. Not being prepared for this stroke of prosperity, he knew not how to profit by it, but recalled his soldiers even by force; who, greedy of booty, were preparing for the sacking, fearing that, by their falling into disorder, and dispersing themselves through the city, which was full of defenders, who were animated against the Florentines, they would be easily overpowered. He never calculated upon the inexpressible advantages, which the courage of success on one side gives over the other, which is struck with terror. The Pisans, in that moment, were no longer able to make a defence, and Gambacorti, amongst the rest, with forty bowmen, had fled from the city towards Lucca, thinking all lost. The ardour of the conquerors was arrested by the orders of the two Vitelli, who, even with sword in hand, drew them back, against the opinion of the Florentine commissaries, and the whole army†.

\* Nardi Ist. lib. 3.

† Nardi Ist. lib. 3. Amm. lib. 27. The disposition of Vitelli was very far from that of Cæsar, who had for motto:

*Nil actum reputans, si quid superesset agendum;*

and who knew so well how to profit of the disconcert of the enemy:

*Dum Fortuna catet, dum conficit omnia terror,—LUCAN, lib. 7.*

In the mean time the Pisans recovered from their panic; all the people hastened to the defence, and even the women animated the soldiery by their shouts, thus doing the duty of warriors for their country's cause\*; the abandoned posts were re-occupied, new bulwarks were erected, the defence again resolved upon with the most determined courage; and fresh succours arriving to the Pisans from Lucca, Vitelli was obliged to abandon the fort of Stampace. The marshy and unwholesome air, too, began to fight for the Pisans, and a great number of soldiers falling sick therefrom, the general assault could not be made upon the city on the 24th August as Vitelli had intended, as if certain of the victory: the evil, too, increasing every day, he was finally obliged to raise the siege and to retire to Cascina. To complete the misfortunes, the artillery, which, on account of the bad roads, could not be brought by land to Cascina, and was going down the river to Leghorn, went to the bottom near the mouth of the Arno. The Pisans, now liberated from the siege, re-occupied the mouth, and dragged up the artillery. The Florentines, irritated by these misfortunes, attributed the loss of the opportunity of taking Pisa not to the little caution evinced by Vitelli, but to his bad faith; and the government, the public, all called him a traitor. There is, however, every reason to think the accusation unjust. The character which Vitelli had always shewn, was circumspect and, perhaps, too cautious; consequently his prudence, although excessive, cannot be a presumption of crime. The proofs, too, against him were of the lightest nature; that he had held

\* Of two sisters who were working with the greatest ardour at the new fortifications, one was killed by a blow of artillery; the other, with Spartan courage, throwing the body into the Gabions, and covering it with earth, continued the work. Nardi Ist., lib. 3.

but little conference about the war with the Florentine commissaries; that he had received embassies from the Pisans, to which was added the passport given in the Casentino to the Duke of Urbino and to Julian. Others, knowing that the Pisans had not sufficient money to purchase that general, imagined, by far fetched subtleties that he acted of accord with the Duke of Milan, who, seeking the friendship of the Florentines, made him retard the acquisition of Pisa in order to give it to him afterwards at his pleasure, and have their alliance for reward; all of them charges or imaginations of very little import. Minds grown sore, however, convert the lightest suspicions into certainty. The commissaries, who were sent in haste, arrested Paul Vitelli at Cascina, and being brought to Florence in the same night he was examined and tortured, but confessed nothing by which he could be pronounced guilty of treason. Nevertheless public hatred determined that he was guilty, and the following day his head was taken off\*. It is the common opinion, however, he was innocent. The historian Nardi, who lived at that time in Florence, and who, as usually happens, was infected with the contagion of public hatred against him, quotes a few letters, (none, however, written by him,) by which he endeavours to prove him guilty. Many of these letters are vague and uncertain; but even admitting their validity, although some suspicions may have foundation, they form no authentic proof, as every man, by applying to them the rules of criminal criticism, may easily perceive†. Vitellozzo, his brother, was also to have been arrested. He was ill in

\* Amm., lib. 27. Nardi, lib. 3. Sanuto Cron. Ven.

† Nardi, lib. 3. Vide Guicciard. Ist., lib. 4., who asserts, that upon the examination of all his dependants and friends, no guilt could be discovered in Paul.

bed. Hearing the orders against him, he answered he was ready to obey; but dressing himself slowly, in order that certain of his broken lances might arrive, being placed on the back of an active and swift horse, a long sword was at a moment put into his hand by one of his people, who encouraged him not to suffer himself to be led like a vile beast of burthen. With this he bravely opened himself a road; was seconded by his men; and fled to Pisa, where he was received with the greatest joy\*.

A fresh tempest was in the mean time threatening Italy. Marriages, as well amongst princes as private individuals, have been always a source of quarrels. The latter decide their disputes peaceably before tribunals, the former always with arms; and sometimes the slightest pretensions, which a private individual would blush to allege before a wise judge, when supported by arms, are maintained by all the cavillous sophisms of *jus publicum*. The new king of France pretended to have rights upon the Duchy of Milan, originating from the matrimony of Valentina Visconti, his grandmother, who had been married more than a century before to Louis Duke of Orleans. Upon the failure of the line of Visconti, the celebrated Francis Sforza had succeeded to the States of Milan, who, to the rights of conquest made by his own valour, united those of Bianca, natural daughter of Philip the last Visconti, married to him; but as she was not legitimate, they were not valued. There might be other pretenders, too, such as the King of Naples and the King of Spain, by inheriting from Alphonso of Arragon the titles originating from the willers, the capricious Philip Visconti was said to have made in his favour. The emperor, too, having once given the investiture of these

\* The same authors, loc. cit.

states, pretended that he was the sovereign master of them\*. The King of France, however, was most able to prove by force the superiority of his pretensions: his preparations were made not for the Milanese alone; he wished also to regain the throne of Naples, which had been already acquired and lost again in so short a space of time. The ruin of the Duke of Milan was imminent. He had indeed only too richly deserved it by so much wickedness, the principal of which was his having called the French into Italy, and having made the road easy for them. They had learnt to despise the Italians, who, badly disciplined as they were, were still less formidable on account of the little concord which prevailed amongst them. An open enmity continued between the Duke of Milan and the Venetians, between the latter and the Florentines. The Pope, who was seeking a sovereign and secular establishment for his son the Cardinal of Valentia, having in vain endeavoured to prevail upon Frederick, King of Naples, to give him his daughter in marriage, saw the hopes of such an establishment placed in the disturbance of Italy; wherefore he lent himself to favour the invasion of Louis, hoping, in the universal confusion, to open a road for the fortune of his son. The Venetians, although at the beginning following the most prudent counsel, they might have liked rather to have a Duke of Milan for a neighbour than a King of France, were afterwards blinded by the advantages offered them by the king, viz., Ghiaradadda and Cremona, and by the hatred borne towards the duke, who was ready upon every little occasion to shew them his hostile dis-

\* Guicciardini *Istor. Ital.*, lib. 4. Those who may wish to read the question of this succession treated of more at length, may read Giovio "Argumentum devolutæ hæreditatis ad Aurelianensium Principum domum brevissima narratione ex historiis explicatum."

position. The Florentines had sent ambassadors to the king to congratulate him upon his succession to the throne, with general protestations of friendship, without however renewing any of those bonds which bound them to Charles, and endeavoured to keep themselves neutral; experience having shewn them how prejudicial Charles, both in enmity and friendship, had been to them. In vain the Duke of Milan stimulated them to join him: they replied that, intent upon regaining Pisa, if they had shewn any favour towards him, this enterprise would have been prevented them by his enemies\*.

The Duke of Milan and King of Naples, therefore, who, seeing no escape, still hoped that such impediments would arise to the French as to cause the failure of the expedition, saw themselves isolated. The pope already began to manifest the hostile views he entertained, as well as the King of France, the favour of the pope. The latter had concentrated all his affection in his son Valentine, at the death of the brother, Duke of Ghent, who, after the irregularities he committed at a supper which he gave together with his brother to their mother the celebrated Vannozza, and other nocturnal debaucheries, had disappeared, and a few days afterwards his body was found in the Tiber. It is universally believed, that his brother was guilty of the murder, in order that he might enjoy the favour of the father, exclusively, together with the riches of the church†. Never had father and son so much resembled each other. Greedy of acquiring states; indifferent to the means they selected for that purpose; impudent in carrying those means into execution; at once using and abusing

\* Guicciard., lib. 4.

† Tommasi, Life of Duke Valentino. Gordon, Guicciard., lib. 4.

the ecclesiastical rights, the pope had secularized the son, although Cardinal Deacon, in order that he might make a splendid matrimony, and called the King of France into Italy, to despoil legitimate princes, and to enrich the son with their estates\*. The pope and the king loaded each other mutually with favours. The son going to France, covered with pontifical riches, displayed a luxury and magnificence, which even eclipsed that court. He carried with him the bull demanded by that king, for the dissolution of the marriage with the daughter of Louis XI. No other reason was assigned, but her deformity and sterility. A few years afterwards, a similar favour being denied to Henry VIII., King of England, threw that kingdom into flames, and liberated it from its dependance upon the pope. But at that time the pontiff dreaded the anger of Charles V., of whom the repudiated was aunt, and Alexander now entertained hopes from the favour of the King of France†.

The king therefore, having cast off his deformed wife, married the queen dowager of Charles VIII., Anne of Bretagne, an amiable woman, whom he had loved before his matrimony, and who brought with her that province in dowry. Borgia was in recompense created by the king Duke of Valencia, whence he obtained the name of Duke Valentine, and, besides this city in the Dauphiné, he had the command of 100 lances, with a provision of 20,000 francs. He made an illustrious matrimony with the daughter of the Lord of Alibret, by means of which he got allied with the royal house; he stipulated too, that the French arms when in

\* This infernal policy has been lively painted by Ariosto in the Satire, where he probably has this pope in view, &c. &c.

Che fia se avrà la cattedra beata?

† See the reflections of the historian Sanuto.—Cron. Ven.

Italy, should alike maintain him in his pretensions and excesses\*.

Hostilities were already about to commence. Trivulzio, capital enemy of the Moor, Ligny, and Obigny, generals of the expedition, approached Italy, while the king still remained at Lyons. The Duke of Milan, had tried every means to ward off the storm, and finally took the most vigorous precautions to defend himself. Resistance was, however, impossible. He was attacked at the same time by the troops of the king and the Venetians, to each of which powers separately he had with difficulty resisted. The treacheries of his friends were added to facilitate the enterprises of his enemies. He was abandoned by one of his oldest generals, and friends, the Count of Cajazzo; his brother Galeazzo S. Severino, commandant of Alexandria, which was the bulwark of his states, fled cowardly with the garrison from that city. All the other places opened their gates to the French†. Louis, obliged to fly into Germany with his sons, and with the remains of his treasure‡, left the castle of Milan, which in those times passed for invincible, very well provided, both with troops and immense ammunition and stores, in the hope that, if the castle maintained itself, it would have been easy for him, with the aid of the Emperor and the Swiss, to regain his states; but the faithless Castellan, or Governor, Bernardino da Corte, who rendered himself notorious, and who was so much reproached even by his

\* Guicciar. Hist., lib. 4. Tomm. Life of Valent.

† Sanuto, Cron. Ven. Guicciard., lib. 4.

‡ Sanuto says, that he fled with nine loaded mules, and a cart, reciting the verses of Virgil:

*Nos patriæ fines, nos dulcia linquimus arva.*



enemies for his treachery\*, was corrupted by the gold of the French, and consigned it to them without firing a shot. Genoa followed the same fate; whereby in less than twenty days Louis was wholly despoiled of his states: a great, but not a rare, example of the bitter game of fortune, which, in the dispersion of his court, in the treachery and flight of his troops, taught him a rigid lesson, that the unfortunate have no friends†.

At the news of so many great successes, King Louis passed into Lombardy. The Florentine republic sent him ambassadors to Milan, to congratulate him upon his victory: at first he received them with coolness, as the Florentines were considered the friends of Louis, and were taxed with cruelty and injustice, on ac-  
 1500. count of the death of Paul Vitelli, whose house had faithfully served France. They were finally admitted into friendship and alliance with the king, with the reciprocal obligation of lending each other aid when necessary.

The Duke Valentine had profited of the prosperous successes of the French. The cities of Romagna were

\* Porcacchi relates, that the French themselves playing at Torocchi, in giving the card of the traitor, said, "I give Bernardino da Corte."

† In the time of his fortune, he chose to boast of having driven the French from Italy as an immortal undertaking, of which he caused a puerile emblem to be painted; viz., a map of Italy full of cocks and chickens, and a Moor with the broom in his hand, who appeared to drive them away. He shewed it one day to Gualterotti, the Florentine ambassador, who was going to France, asking him what he thought of it. The ambassador, piqued at the haughtiness and loquacity of the Moor, with which at every moment he stung the Florentine republic, answered him, that the invention was fine and witty, but it appeared to him, that the Moor drew the brush upon himself. Nardi Hist. Fior. lib. 3.

governed by petty lords, who, as vicars of the church, were bound to acknowledge her supreme power, but governed their own states without dependence. Against these lords, without any other plea than their insignificance, and impotence to defend themselves, Valentine directed his attention, with a considerable body of French, led on by Ino d' Allegre, and made himself master of Imola, Cesena, and Forli. The latter city only, where the celebrated Catharine Sforza resided, made a brave resistance. She was obliged, however, to yield to superior force; Catharine was taken prisoner, and sent to Castel San Angelo. Ino d' Allegre, who had admired her talents and courage, which were so superior to her sex, set her at liberty\*. Her sons by the Count Jerome Riarrio, whom she sent to Florence before the siege, were charitably received by Francis Pepi, the gonfaloniere†. The French troops were recalled upon the Milanese territory, on account of fresh troubles having broken out thereon; and Valentine, therefore, was not enabled to follow up his conquests. He returned to Rome, and made a triumphal entrance into the city, as if his conquests had shed fresh lustre upon the capitol.

The jubilee occurred in that year, and the devout faithful were hastening to Rome, in pursuit of spiritual treasures. Alexander, who alone sought after temporal riches, opened the fountain of indulgences, also, to those who could not repair to Rome, upon the condition of their paying the third of what the journey would have cost them‡. The people vied with each other in pay-

\* Guicciard. Hist. lib. 4; Sanuto Cron. Ven.; Ranal. Ann. Eccl.

† Ammir. Hist. lib. 27.

‡ According to Bembo, he drew from the Venetian states alone one hundred and ninety-nine pounds of gold, to which giving the value of that time, the sum amounts to 50,000 sequins. The pope

ing this tribute, whilst sacred questors were sent to collect these pious contributions, which, under the pretext of employing them against the Turks, served only to pamper the luxury, augment the pomp, and feed the debauchery, of the pontifical court and the sons of the pope. In the midst of the devout hymns which were sung during the holy year, Rome was polluted by the most scandalous Bacchanalian orgies\*.

After the return of the King of France, either that the Milanese thought themselves treated too harshly by the French, or from the natural volubility of the people, who are always discontented with the present government, Louis began to be desired, and he was secretly recalled. Having taken 10,000 Swiss and 500 chief lancers into pay, he came by the lake to Como, which town opened the gates to him. Milan declared in his favour, and the French retired to a castle. Various other cities, too, returned under the dominion of their ancient master. The king made astonishing expedition to send powerful reinforcements under Tramoglia, the greater part of whom being Swiss, immediately began to carry on secret correspondence, by means of which Louis was betrayed, and given up to the French, together with his brother the Cardinal Ascanio. Being brought to France, they were shut up in different prisons. Louis in the castle of Loches in Berry, where he finished his days, after ten years of an unhappy life; the Cardinal Ascanio in the tower of Bourges, where King Louis himself, when Duke of Orleans, had been shut up for two years, and where the cardinal also remained for

made also twelve cardinals, distributing the twelve hats to the highest bidder. (Guicc. Hist. lib. 5.)

\* Guicciard. Hist. lib. 5.

two, and was afterwards liberated under the pontiff Julian II. Upon the first arrival of the French, the little son of Galeazzo, condemned to the monastic life, had been taken to France with his mother, the unfortunate Isabella: the mother, being sent back to King Frederick, her uncle, at Naples, was obliged to be spectatress of the final ruin of the paternal house, after having been witness to that of her husband\*.

This was the sad catastrophe which attended the family of Sforza, to the misfortune of Italy; since the Duchy of Milan became afterwards the apple of discord between Austria, Spain, and France, which brought so many armies into this beautiful country to tear it to pieces. The remainder of the states of Louis, which, rebelling from the French, had returned to their devotion to their old master, expiated their error by heavy contributions. Milan was taxed with 300,000 ducats, Pavia with 100,000; money, that most powerful spring of mankind, having always alike given rise to, and settled, innumerable misfortunes. One of the losses, far more valuable than money, was that of the noble library of Pavia, which was rich in precious manuscripts, and was transported by the conqueror to France, and deposited at Blois.

Louis the Moor has been celebrated by many historians for the culture of his mind, the sagacity he displayed, and the prudence which guided him†. It may, however, be very much doubted if this latter praise is due to him. It is true that we frequently judge from events, and opinion is often unjust; the caprice of fortune, which deludes the senses, having so great a share in it: but this does not appear to be the case here. It would

\* Guicc. lib. 4. Cron. di Ven.

† Pontanus de Prud. Guicc. lib. 4.

not have been difficult for him to have foreseen his dangers by calling the French into Italy; and, if the first emotions of anger against the reigning family of Naples had induced him to invite them, a more mature reflection ought to have appeased him upon the entreaties made by the old Ferdinand and Alphonso, who threw themselves into his arms; and certainly he was then master of the gates of Italy. Knowing afterwards that the Duke of Orleans was ready, whenever he had the power, to attack his states, he ought to have remained in perfect accord with the Venetians, who, united with him, would have made a brave resistance to every new invasion: but, from motives of jealousy, particularly at the government of Pisa, he opposed them, and made himself so odious to them, that they joined his greatest enemy\*. It appears rather he may be considered a man who was most greedy of reigning, cruel towards his own family, double-minded, fraudulent, and of middling political capacity.

The Florentines would have been secure and tranquil in the midst of these storms, had not the thorn which continually pricked them, the anxiety of regaining Pisa, prevented it. The Pisans had great favourites, and the Florentines great enemies, with the King of France. The Lucchese, the Genoese, the Siennese, offered large sums if Pisa, Pietra Santa and Montepulciano remained free. John James Trivalzi, and John Louis Fresco, fought also for the liberty of Pisa, and each entertained views of becoming master of her: but the king, consulting with the Cardinal of Rouen, preserved his faith with the Florentines, and gave them the succours agreed upon†.

\* "The Venetians, if they had not been so often irritated, would have liked him for a neighbour, rather than the King of France,"—Sanuto Cron.

† Guicciard. Istor. lib. 5.

They obtained from the King of France, as they had stipulated in the alliance, 5,000 Swiss, and 500 lances, a troop commanded by Beaumont, who was so acceptable to them, from being the same man who had restored Leghorn to them. But few enterprises of the Florentines turned out more unfortunate than this. These troops came from Lombardy, and their first operation was to take Massa from the Marquis Alberic Malaspina, a friend of the Florentines, at the instigation of his brother Gabriel: they then occupied Pietra Santa, which was held by the Lucchese, and instead of consigning it immediately, according to the treaty, to the Florentines, they said they would not give it up until after the conquest of Pisa. These were the first infractions. When arrived at Pisa, they pitched their camp between the gate along the shores, (*Porta alle Piagge*,) and *Porta Calcesana*, and began to batter the walls with such fury that in a few hours they threw down about forty arms of it, by which an aperture was made through which horses might enter, to say nothing of infantry. In the first moment the Florentines thought themselves masters of Pisa, but the soldiers rushing forward, met, beyond the wall, with a broad and deep ditch, which could not be passed without great danger; they, consequently, remained quiet that day. On the following they thought of no other operations, which from that moment began to relax.

In the mean time, either by negligence or connivance, Tarlatino was enabled to enter at the sea-gate, and brought a reinforcement to the Pisans. All the chiefs of the army, from Beaumont downwards, took compassion upon the Pisans, and detested the Florentines. The Pisans had already sent two ambassadors to the French officers since their approach, protesting that they were willing to surrender to the French arms upon the agreement of

not being placed under the Florentines, and sought to excite their pity by all possible representations. The Lucchese, too, both by gold and instigations, made the faith of these troops totter, who, instead of fighting, began to make strange demands, and to exact, with begging pretexts, undue sums from the Florentines; arrested their commissary, Lucas Albizzi, obliged him to pay 1,500 ducats of ransom; and, after these operations, retired into Lombardy\*. To add to their misfortunes, they were reproached by the king with their want of precaution in having produced so unsuccessful an issue, and were obliged to send him two ambassadors, Francis Casa, and Nicholas Macchiavelli. All this negotiation, however, terminated only in fresh expense, and the Florentines were fined 10,000 dollars more. They were threatened, too, with a greater misfortune. The Duke Valentine, greedy of aggrandizement on every side, after having occupied various cities of Romagna, laid siege to Faenza. The favour of France, the power of the pope, and his fraudulent mind, induced them to fear also that, even able to do so, he would not spare the Florentine republic. The Venetians, too, who were become fresh enemies to the Florentines, on account of the contests about Pisa, proposed to send back the family of the Medicis, and insinuated to Valentine that the possession of his states in Romagna would be more stable, by bordering upon a country governed by a friend, than by a turbulent republic. Valentine had already taken Faenza after a long siege: contrary to the promise he had made in the capitulation, he retained the young Manfredi, satisfied his brutal lust upon him as was generally believed, and then

\* Nardi, *Istor.* lib. 4. Ammir. lib. 27. Guicciard. lib. 5. Buonaccorsi *Diar.*

sent him a prisoner to Rome, where he was strangled\*.

<sup>1501.</sup> He tried the same, but in vain, with Bologna, which partly defended herself, and partly purchased herself again by tribute.

Peter del Bene, his friend, had been already sent to him as ambassador by the Florentines, but Galeot Pazzi was associated with him, in order to congratulate him in appearance, but in reality only to spy upon his intentions. He demanded a passage for his troops through the states of the republic, without declaring where he would go: and received for answer, that if he marched in small parties, and avoided walled towns, it would be conceded to him. He had already sent troops to the Pisans, commanded by Oliverotto of Fermo, his general, in order that the Florentines, being occupied more on this side, might have less leisure to protect themselves from him †. He marched with 800 men of arms, and 7,000 infantry; and, upon arriving at Barberino, declared that the government should be changed, some satisfaction given to the Vitelli, the Orsini, and the Medicis; that a command should be granted him by the republic, and the passage not denied him to undertake the enterprise against Piombino, with some other requests of less importance. He received for answer, that his wishes should be complied with, except in what regarded the change of government.

The republic, however, knowing his bad designs, had taken the necessary precautions for defence. A strong guard was placed in Firenzuola; faithful troops were drawn from every side, and the most important places were fortified. A part of the troops coming from

\* Nardi, Ist. lib. 4. Guicciard. Ist. lib. 5.

† Ammir. lib. 27. Nardi, lib. 4.



Mugello, halted at the Loggia, under William Pazzi; another from the Casentino, commanded by the celebrated Abbot Basil of Camaldoli, garrisoned Bellosguardo; whilst Louis Stufa conducted other troops from Romagna, who covered the hill of Fiesole: the necessary dispositions were made in Florence to avoid all tumult, and the city was secured\*.

Valentine arrived as far as Campi, where, seeing the firmness evinced by the Florentines, and that the presence of so many armed men caused no commotion in the city, he ventured not openly to declare himself an enemy, and received rather the command from the republic of three hundred lancers, with the provision of 36,000 dollars, which, in order to free themselves from all vexation, was freely granted him. He never, however, completed his enterprise upon Piombino; but, having occupied some places, such as Sughereto, Scarlino, the island of Elba, and Pianosa, where he left troops, he moved towards Rome to join the French, who were already marching to the conquest of the kingdom of Naples.

It was his intention in this expedition, from what appeared, to change the government of Florence, and to replace the Medicis, endeavouring to execute it, if he could, with the authority of the King of France. Julian de Medicis had, indeed, shortly before, left Bologna, by advice of the pope, to meet that king†. During his passage through Tuscany, Piero de Medicis had stopped at Lugano; but, on the side of France, the

\* Buonac. Diar.; Nardi, lib. 4. This writer relates various facts, from which it appears it may be inferred, that there was some intention in the magistrates to change the government, availing themselves of this pretext; but that the firmness of the people prevented it.

† Buonac. Diar.; Nardi, Ist. lib. 4.

Medicis enjoyed no favour: nay, the king, persuaded by the Florentine ambassadors, sent an order to Valentine not to molest them, and to hasten to the enterprise of Naples\*. It was not that Valentine loved, nay, he probably detested, Piero de Medicis†, but he chose rather to avail himself of him, as of an instrument adapted to disturb that republic; an instrument which he would have afterwards broken, when, either become useless or dangerous, it could have prevented him from occupying it; whereto, probably, his views tended.

During this time the French troops, led on by Obigny to the conquest of Naples, were passing in two divisions through the Florentine territory: the one by Pontremoli, Lucca, Pisa, Cascina, and by the vale of the Elsa; the other from Bologna fell down upon Mugello; whence, by the Valdarno, it joined the other column at Sienna. The discipline and the modesty evinced by these troops in their passage, made a singular contrast to the diabolical excesses practised by the troops of the son of the pope, who, although received and treated as a friend by the republic, sacked her states like a cruel enemy‡.

The duchy of Milan was acquired and recovered with a success, which invited the King of France still more

\* Buonac. Diar.

† There were causes for it before the pontificate of Alexander VI. Valentine, then Bishop of Pampeluna, was at the college of Pisa. Coming to Florence, to speak to Piero de Medicis, on account of a criminal case of a servant of his, after many hours of useless expectation, he went away irritated, without speaking to him.—Guicciar. Ist. lib. 5. He was not a man to forget; nay, his character resembled one of the most atrocious of antiquity.

‡ Nardi, Ist. lib. 4., relates that the troops of Valentine arrived at Poggibonsi, so loaded with booty, that they were unable to carry it, “gave a couple of oxen for two ducats, and for a similar price sold one of the girls, which they were unwilling to keep with them.”

to undertake the enterprise against Naples. Like a prudent man, however, he wished first to assure himself of not being molested by other powers. The Emperor Maximilian, who was poor and needy, wished and unwished easily, ready to promise every thing to those who gave him money, and to break his agreements on account of those who gave him more. Although he had promised Frederick, King of Naples, from whom he had received 40,000 ducats, not to make any agreement with his enemy, as he had promised the Duke of Milan, he entered, nevertheless, into a compact with the King of France, by means of further loans of money and imaginary promises. The King of Spain, who, as possessor of Sicily, and a relative of Frederick, both by interest and ties of blood, ought to have opposed the French armies, as his honour and the alliance he maintained with Frederick demanded, thought better to make a secret agreement with the King of France, in order to divide with him the spoils of his betrayed relation: this was the more reprehensible, inasmuch as his troops, entering as auxiliaries into his states, declared themselves suddenly enemies, at the time that he was assailed by the French on the other side. The treaty was not made known until the arrival of the latter at Rome: the pope gave his sanction to it, and it was known that the King of France would get Naples, with Abruzzo and Terra di Lavoro; Ferdinand, Puglia and Calabria\*. Besides the infamy which attended it, nothing could happen more fatal to Italy than this impolitic treaty, even for the two contracting parties themselves, who, probably, intended, like two gamblers, after having robbed a third, to rob each other. It would not have been difficult to

\* Guicc. Ist. lib. 5.

see, that the King of Spain, who was in the peaceable possession of Sicily, had a certain advantage over the King of France, who was obliged to send succours from afar; that men and treasure would be sacrificed in the long contest; that they would be the cause of the unhappiness of their people, and of the Italians in general; but where ambition and bad faith conspire together, nations are counted for nothing. Consalvo, one of the greatest generals, was obliged to perform a part in that transaction, which was not very honourable, a part, to which, although from the testimony of his historian\*, his generous heart was repugnant, he, nevertheless, played sufficiently well, by making Frederick believe he acted as ally, until he had taken possession, for his king, of those places, which he appeared to occupy, in order to defend them against the French. Then they shook off the mask. There was hardly any further contest. The city of Capua alone made a good resistance: but incapable of maintaining herself, whilst she was finally about to capitulate, the French entered treacherously, made a horrible massacre of the citizens, pardoned neither sex nor age, and satiated their brutal lust even on religious virgins†.

Frederick of Naples, flying to Ischia, seeing his irreparable ruin, wished to have recourse rather to the King of France, than to his unnatural relation. From the former he accepted the duchy of Angiers, with 50,000 ducats a year‡. He shewed very great discernment in preferring the faith of a foreign sovereign to that of a

\* Jovius, Vita Consal.

† The Duke Valentine, who followed the army, wished to see the nuns, who had been made prisoners, and selected forty of the most beautiful to take with him.

‡ Buonac. Diar.; Jov. Vita Cons.; Guicc. Ist. lib. 5.

relation, as the misfortune of his son proved, which throws a fresh stain upon the character of Consalvo. The son of Frederick had taken shelter in Taranto, given by the father in custody of the Count of Potenza, and of friar Leonard, Chevalier of Rhodes. That city being besieged, they agreed with Consalvo to give it up, if within four months it received no succours; upon the promise, however, and oath taken upon the sacrament, to let the son of Frederick freely go where he pleased. The place was surrendered, but Consalvo retained that prince, and sent him a prisoner into Spain\*. Frederick lived in France for about three years, and his death was bewailed in elegant verses by Sannazzaro, one of the greatest Neapolitan poets, whose character had suffered no change from the altered fortune of his master†.

Italy was now in the power both of the French and the pope. From the latter the Florentine republic had much to dread, whence she endeavoured to gain the Cardinal of Rouen, Governor of Milan, and to tie herself more closely with the King of France, in order to enjoy his protection; but the answers they gave were ambiguous, and their operations still more so. The Florentines, with much finesse, gave the king to understand, that the emperor, who said he wished to come to be crowned in Italy, had demanded money. The ambassadors, in fact, came, and the republic answered them, that she would not fail, at his arrival, to pay him 30,000 ducats, and give him a guard of one hundred men. This news being artfully made known to the King of France, hastened the agreement, who dreaded that the republic might take new directions, and connect herself

\* Guicc. lib. 5. Giovio makes a bad defence of his hero.

† See the poem *Protheus*.

in alliance with the emperor. It was therefore agreed upon, by new stipulations, that the king was to furnish four hundred men of arms to the Florentines, for the enterprise against Pisa, and the latter to pay him, in three years, 120,000 ducats\*.

Valentine, having terminated the war of Naples, had already hastily returned under Piombino, the lord of which, James Appiano, being unable to resist, fled into France, to implore the protection of that king, leaving his little son to the care of Anthony Filicaia. Whilst

<sup>1502.</sup> Valentine was carrying on the war in Tuscany, with all good faith, and using all justice, the pope disdained not to march from Rome, carry his temporal arms against the Colonnese and Savelli, and lay siege to Sermoneta. After such glorious conquests, he came to Tuscany to Piombino, and gave rise to various conjectures upon this journey. The most probable motive for it appears to have been, that of finding means of occupying Sienna, of adding it to the states of his son, and to give the states of Piombino in compensation to Petrucci. Be this as it may, it is certain that the cautious Petrucci, who was frequently called thither by the pope, excused himself always from going by an infirmity, either true or feigned†.

Rome, in the mean time, being deprived of her two chief governors, could be under no alarm, as the government remained in the hands of a person, fitted really to do honour to the chair of St. Peter. The malignity of fable has invented, that the seat of the supreme pontiff has been once occupied by the Popess Joan. The fable, at that time, was in some measure verified, in the famous Lucretia, daughter of the pope, in whose hands he left

\* Amm. lib. 27.

† Amm. lib. 27.

the whole government of Rome during his absence\*. She was highly favoured by the pope, who wished to console her widowhood by a new illustrious husband,

\* Burcardo, *Diar.*—"All his chamber and palace, and articles thereto belonging, he left to Donna Lucrezia Borgia, his daughter, who, during such absence, occupied the chambers of the pope, and gave her authority to open his letters, and if any thing difficult occurred, she might have the counsels of the cardinals of Lisbon, and others, whose aid she might call." The writers of her times have charged Lucretia Borgia with the most infamous accusations: let the verse of Pontano be sufficient:

. . . . Alexandri filia, sponsa, nurus.

The English writer, Roscoe, in the *Life of Leo X.*, has taken upon him to defend her. As amongst the former, the Neapolitan writers, and particularly the poets Pontano and Sannazzaro, are most remarkable, Roscoe pretends that the hatred borne against the pontiff and Valentine, for having favoured the French to dethrone the family of Arragon, has made them declaim against the Borgiæ. If we treat of the first invasion of Charles VIII., this is absolutely false, because the pope and Valentine were friends to the Borgiæ, and had good reason to save themselves from the French arms, wherever they could, shewed themselves enemies of Charles, and at his re-passage, the pontiff retired from Rome, thinking himself hardly safe at Perugia. Beginning with Guicciardini, all say the same, and Pontano was so far from shewing an hostile inclination towards Charles, that, with little gratitude indeed towards his ancient masters, he celebrated the solemn possession of Charles with a public oration.—Guicciardini's *History*, book 2. It is true that Borgia favoured the second invasion: but the evil was already done. With regard to Lucrezia, it is difficult to suppose that she was a discreet and modest woman, knowing the scandalous orgies, at which she made no difficulty of appearing, and which Buccardo, the master of ceremonies, who daily wrote down the diary of the palace, relates with a cold gravity, as if he were narrating any sacred or profane ceremony. Amongst various tales, that related by Roscoe himself, at page 11 of the *Dissertation*, at the end of the 1st vol. of the original edition of 1800, in 4to., appears almost incredible.

After that, he thinks that the praises bestowed by the poets, for the most part Ferrarese, may be confronted with these great testimonies,

who was her fourth: the two former were still alive, and the marriages had been dissolved from family convenience; the third had been assassinated by violence, by the order of Valentine; this was the unfortunate Duke Biselli\*, a youth of excellent disposition, and of fine figure, and for the loss of whom Donna Lucretia, although educated both by that father and by that brother, shewed her grief and indignation, and retired to the solitude of Nepi†. The new matrimony was one of the most illustrious. She married Alphonso, the eldest son of the Duke of Ferrara, one of the greatest and the most illustrious reigning houses of Italy: the husband was one of the greatest ornaments of that family, and is immortalized, with his brother, the

not excepting Ariosto, who, at the 48th canto, stroff. 83, says of her;

“ La cui bellezza ad onestà, preporre  
Deve all' antica la sua patria Roma.”

But the very accurate Muratori, although devoted to the house of Este, is obliged to confess, upon the documents before him, speaking of the nuptials of Lucrezia with the Lord of Pesaro, that, “with great solemnity, but with little decorum, they were celebrated in the pontifical palace;” and Gibbon, speaking of Hercules II., of Este, son of Alphonso and her, adds, “that she cancelled, by a more noble alliance, the stain of her birth.” And the observation made by Roscoe, upon this head, is of no importance, wherein he accuses Gibbon of contradiction, for having called Hercules of the blood of Este, whilst he thinks him a bastard, since every one knows, that all the children born of a married woman are regarded as legitimate, if there are no contrary proofs thereof, such as are required by the laws.

\* Burcardo, page 72 of his Journal, after mentioning the assassination of the Duke Biselli, adds, “Cum non vellet hujusmodi vulneribus mori, in lecto fuit strangulatus.” Tommasi relates it equally at page 273-74 of the edition of 1671, and quotes the Journals of Julian Passeri.

† Tommasi, Life of Duke Valentine.



Cardinal Hippolite, in the verses of Ariosto. Neither the husband nor the father liked this connexion: they adhered to it from fear. The nuptials took place in Rome, where the bride was brought by the brothers-in-law, with royal luxury and magnificence, and those public demonstrations of joy, of which the pope and Valentino were so fond, took place. They were afterwards celebrated in Ferrara, the pontiff having, on this account, prolonged the carnival to a considerable part of Lent\*.

The impartial historian must render justice to this woman, who, after so many scandalous scenes, in which the world had seen her perform, became an excellent wife, an affectionate mother, a wise and pious princess, and, giving herself up to the cultivation of morality and religion, before her death, which happened before old age came on, she built a temple and a monastery of nuns†. Her natural disposition probably was good, but the corruption of the court, of the father and the brother, and their example, transported her to indulgence in vice‡.

\* Nardi, Ist. lib. 4. Tomasi, Vita del Duca Valentino.

† Jovius, Vita Alphonsi.

‡ After this time we cannot perhaps reproach Lucretia but with one weakness, in favour of Peter Bembo, afterwards cardinal. He was then in the flower of his age and intellect. We have many of the billets she wrote to Bembo in the Ambrosian library: every one may read them, and some of them have been copied by Doctor Baldassan Oltrocchi, in a letter to Count Mazzuchelli. Finally, in this little code, we see a feigned piece of parchment, folded, which contains a long lock of blond and very fine hair; which has always passed for the hair of Lucretia Borgia. The reader will be able to judge if these loves were innocent, when he examines the billets, the mystery concealed in the correspondence, the cipher in the address, and the prior life led by Lucretia. That she afterwards became also devout, is very credible, because increasing age, particularly for women, is a great missionary.

After the festivals were over, the pope and his son returned to their treacheries and assassinations. The Duke Guidubaldo d'Urbino was treacherously despoiled of his states. Relying upon the good faith of this traitor, and upon his demanding arms and men from him, he satisfied him with both, when he suddenly entered his states as an enemy, and tried every means to make the duke a prisoner, who, almost miraculously, escaped from the hands of that perfidious wretch\*. Julian Varano, Prince of Camerino, was not so happy: his estates were surprised, and he himself, falling amongst the claws of the tiger, was strangled, together with his two sons†.

The Florentines, who saw every thing succeed with this wretch, were in great apprehension; when, fortunately, the agreement made with the King of France, and the orders not to molest them, which were given to the duke, restored them to tranquillity. They had begun hostilities against Pisa, when they received the news that Arezzo, Cortona, San Sepolcro, Anghiari, with many of the places and castles around, had rebelled; that Peter, or Piero de Medicis and the cardinal were in Arezzo, whence this loss, after that of Pisa, deprived the republic of the better part of her states. A long and difficult war was to be foreseen, since Vitellozzo and Orsini, who had suddenly repaired thither, would

\* The manner in which the duke saved himself, and all the accidents of his flight, are related at length, in a letter, written by the same to the Cardinal of S. Piero, in Vincula, who was afterwards Julius II., dated from Mantua, 28th June. This important and curious narrative existed in the archive of Urbino, and is now in the archive of Tuscany, whence we have taken the copy, and given it in a document at the end of the volume.

† Guicciard. lib. 5. Buonacc. Diar.

be supported by the Siennese. But the recent examples of the cruelty of Valentino we have related, proved the salvation of the Florentines. Those princes, and particularly Vitellozzo, began to dread a similar fate, from a man of that disposition, who was seen to be intent upon despoiling the little princes: Vitellozzo, therefore, who was in Arezzo, agreed with the French to give them that city, which, by the orders of the King of France, returned immediately, together with all other places that had been lost, under the power of the Florentines\*.

\* Buonacc. *Diar. Nardi*, lib. 4. *Ammir. lib.* 27.



## **DOCUMENTS.**

DO NOT WRITE

## DOCUMENT I.

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AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF THE SIGNIORY OF FLORENCE  
TO POPE SIXTUS IV.

MIRATI primum sumus, Beatissime Pater, inveteratam ad nos scribendi Summorum Pontificum consuetudinem repente mutatam, his literis tuis, quas per præconem Calabrum afferri voluisti. Quamquam libertatis et justitiæ, in inscriptione, subtracta nomina, satis quid sibi velint, ipsa aperiunt. Si enim quæ suades facturi fuerimus, ut nos quoque nominum talium oblivisceremur, penitùs necessè fuit. Et cur populo scribitur, novo more? Et cum ad eum scribis populum, quem ità te amare, et tanta prosequè charitate asseris, perverso scribendi more, dilectionis etiam appellationem, a qua, in hanc diem, solitæ sunt exordiri Pontificales vere literæ, pretermittis? An non diligis eum populum, quem censuris castigas talibus? Quem armis tuis in viam tuam redigere conaris? Nulla profectò, si dilectionis auferas, causa restabit, cur ità persequere.

Nunc ad literas venimus. Ejicere vis nos è civitate Laurentium de Medicis: hujus autem voluntatis tuæ duas, in literis tuis, potissimum causas colligimus: et quod Tyrannus noster sit; et quod publico Religionis Christianæ bono adversetur.

Quo ergò pacto, ut primam causam primum diluamus, nos liberi erimus Laurentio ejecto, si, tuo jussu, erit ejectus? Contraria tuæ literæ loquuntur, quæ, dùm libertatem pollicentur, imperando auferunt: et, ut isto te labore liberemus ejicere nos malos cives

tyrannosque dedicimus et administrare Rem nostram Publicam, sine monitoribus. Redi paulum ad te, Beatissime Pater, oramus: da locum affectibus, qui Sacrosanc̃tam istam Sedem, istam Gravitatem, et Sanctitatem Pontificalem adeò decorant. Laurentium de Medicis Tyrannum clamitas; at nos, Populusque noster, defensorem nostræ libertatis, cum cæteris quos tu arguis, civibus, experimur, et, una omnium voce appellamus; parati, in quemcunque rerum eventum, omnia ponere pro Laurenti de Medicis salute, et civium reliquorum, in qua quidem publicam salutem et libertatem contineri, nemo nostrum dubitat. Quod invehuntur in Laurentium illæ literæ liberius, nihil est, quod contradicamus in præsertia: veritas ipsa satis contradicet, et tua conscientia, hoc tamen fatebimur, Beatissime Pater, movent risum omnibus nobis, tam inaniter, ne dicamus maligne, confecta audientibus. Nam quod callidè Bartholomæi Colleonis temporum mentionem facis, et insinulas confæderatorum nostrorum studia, non est acutiore opus interprete. Artes sunt istæ Pontificiæ Majestatis dignæ, et Vicariatus Christi? Nos tamen, etiam tum, sociorum integram fidem sumus experti, quorum auxiliis gloriose adèò debellabimus. Nos melius, dictum id sit bona omnium venia ista novimus; et Laurentium de Medicis, qui ab omni familia sua, qui ab avo Cosmo, Patre Patriæ nostræ, qui a Petro Patre, clarissimo viro, et optimè de nostra libertate merito, nihil degenerat, huic civi nostro, quem et Religione vera, et Dei cultu, et charitate, et pietate præponamus, non habemus, tu de civitate ejicere vis? Movet te fortassè et de ea re Laurentium succenses, quòd è furentibus populi armis Raphælem Cardinalem, tuum nepotem, eripi curaverit, et salvum reddiderit! movet, quod, trucidato Juliano fratre, saucius ipse, divina potius quam humana aliqua spe, sceleratos gladios sacrilegosque paricidarum, et mortem evitaverit! Si cædi si passus sit ab missis a vobis efferratissimis satellitibus; si Arcem libertatis nostræ, publicum Palatium captum dolis à proditoribus vestris, non



recuperassemus ; si trucidandos nosmet, ac Magistratus nostros, et cives tradidissemus vobis ; nihil modo tecum contentionis haberemus.

Sed ut ad alteram descendamus causam ; quomodo talis aliquis civis publico est, ut scribis, bono adversatus ? Aliæ causæ sunt, quæ arma Christiana movent contra Christianos, et defensionem Religionis, atque expeditionem in Turchos impediunt, ut, aliàs quoque, Imperatorum, Ratisbonæ, eam procurantem impediunt, in quam tamen nos publice longas naves, et tibi, et Ferdinando Regi, complures dono dedimus ; et Cosmus, Laurenti avus superscriptus, suis privatis sumptibus, Summo Pontifici unam perpulchrè armatam est elargitus ; præterea, magnam pecuniarum vim, ut pro viribus laborante Religioni nostræ succurreremus, dum Laurentius de Medicis in urbe esset, subministravimus ; et juvimus eo florentium millibus Ferdinandum Regem, quem modò fama fert, et legatis et muneribus conciliare sibi Religionis Christianæ publicum hostem, et qui, cum te conjunctus, modo Christianis bellum infert, dum in limine Italiæ superbissimus ille victoriosissimusque insultat. Juvimus, etiam, hortatu tuo, Matthiam Hungariæ Regem ; et, qui sunt nobiscum fœdere conjunctissimi, Venetis, non defuimus. Ad quem multò hæc magis pertinent, pluraque majoraque non fecit ; et tamen hanc causam asseris cur bellum inferes : et ita omnia jura humana divinaque confundas ! Sed alia profecto, alia causa est, quæ armat te contra Christianos, et quidem istius Sacrosanctæ Sedis, in qua Vicarium Christi sedere jam oportet, præcipuos perpetuosque cultores. Ex quo in ista sede es, quid arma tua, quid signa Pontificalia, quid Pedum istud Beati Petri, quid navicula egerit, heu ! nimis notum est : quæ profecto quis sit is qui publico adversetur bono, heu ! nimium declarant. Nos quid egerimus pro quiete Italiæ, dum tibi, cum sociis nostris, securitatem rerum tuarum, paulò antè sic te rogante, promittimus ; dum Hieronimo Comiti, nepoti tuo, dignitatem esse avitam meri-

tissimò procuramus ; sed noti nondùm erant mores perditissimi ac feralis, execrandaque natura : dum urbinatem ducem ad stipendia fœderis nostris traducere conamur, ut eos offerimus conditiones, quæ multo suprâ virtutem, et militandi, et ducandi, consuetudinem essent, ut omni ex parte stabilita Italiæ pax esset, manifestatum est. Et tamen audent illæ literæ tuæ turbatorem Italicæ quietis appellare Laurentium !

Indue, indue, Beatissime Pater, meliorem mentem ; memineris pastoralis officii tui, et Vicariatus Christi ; memineris clavium non in istos usus datarum. Quam enim veremur, ne in nostra tempora illud incidat dictu Evangelicum : “ malos male perdet, et vincam suam locabit aliis agricolis !”

Nos certe, cum Christo, Redemptore et Salvatore nostro, qui justissimam causam nostram proteget, et non desseret cultores suos sperantes in se, juvantibus Sociis, et causam nostram suam causam reputantibus, juvante etiam et protegente nos Ludovico Christianissimo Francorum Rege, perpetuo Patrono, et Patræ civitatis nostræ, pro Religione et libertate nostra fortiter repugnabimus.

Vale, Die xxi. Julii, 1478.

## DOCUMENT II.

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LETTER OF THE ABBE MORELLI, LIBRARIAN OF ST. MARK'S  
IN VENICE, TO THE AUTHOR.

*Venice, 6th December, 1802.*

Most esteemed and learned Sir—

I keep the word I gave you, to write a few lines concerning the copy of an ancient impression of the celebrated Florentine synod, which I had seen in the house of Count Trifon Urachiers, Counsellor of the Republic of Venice, and who possesses a very valuable library. According to my memorandums, I find that I saw it in the year 1771; and I remarked that the book consists of ten papers of small size, and of so ancient a print, that it may well pass for that of the year 1478, in which year, the celebration of the synod took place. That copy was deficient in its sixth paper or page, and Urachiers had never succeeded in finding another of the same edition to make good his own, although he sought for it very diligently. When the possessor died some years ago, I was one of the first to get possession of his books; and I immediately turned my attention to the synod. But in fact it was no longer to be found, because when the good old man became infirm, some of his most precious books, together with the synod, which was already become celebrated, had been sold by a relation of his; nor have I ever been able to learn into whose hands they came.

However, I had got the loan of that copy from the possessor, and was enabled to compare the text thereof with the new print of 1770: I have, however, not paid very great attention to it, because the matter was no longer so very interesting to me. Now, by looking again amongst my memorandums, I discover that I had perceived a very great difference between the old and the new print: in the former, the text appeared to me, for the most part, legitimate and true, and the latter frequently altered and spoiled. The old edition bears not that beginning of the new one, *oramus vos omnes Chiristianos*, &c., as far as the words *non degenetis*: but begins with the words immediately following of the new one, *Florentia Synodus in luce*, &c., and thus it corresponds with the text published by Monseigneur Fabbroni. I observed a very great defect in the new edition at page 44, in the line before the penultimate, after the words *clausula præter illam*; since as much is wanting there as is contained in two pages of the old edition; which deficiency is not to be found in the Fabbronian text. I observed many passages and proper names corrupted; but I made no exact memorandum of them. I perceive from notices, however, which I have preserved, made upon the copy of the edition of 1770, that the text of the latter is not taken from the old edition, but from some manuscript, and that it presents some reading which is preferable to the old; that the Fabbronian text is of a second dictation, more dressed than the first, as represented in the ancient edition; and that, nevertheless, with the aid of the said old edition, some words or passages might be made true, which are read incorrectly in the Fabbronian text, from defect of the text in hand writing, from which it was taken.

This difference of dictation, considered in addition to the form of the writing, which presents rather an invective than any thing else, leads me to think that it is not a synodal act; although a synod may have been really convoked upon that business; of which you may know more than I do both by

reading the historians, and the examination of the documents of those archives.

Be pleased to accept this little information; make my best respects to our most worthy Monseigneur Fabbioni, to whose good opinion I recommend myself, and believe me to be impressed with the highest esteem and respect,

Your most devoted and obedient Servant,

JAMES MORELLI.

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### DOCUMENT III.

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*Copy of a Letter from Guido Ubaldo of Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, to the Cardinal of St. Piero in Vincula, who become afterwards Julius II., wherein he gives an account of his flight from the state, which was treacherously invaded by Duke Valentine.*

Most Reverend Lord Cardinal,

I am certain that your lordship will have heard, by this time, of the great treachery used towards me by the pope and Duke Valentine, and will have been surprised at receiving no notice thereof from me; for which failure I beseech you to pardon me, knowing that I have undergone so much fatigue to save this poor person of mine, which, rather by a miracle of God than any other reason, is now here. But to tell you all, it is necessary you should know, that, after the return of Nicolosso Doria, the affairs of Arezzo against the Florentines being discovered, not being able to be persuaded of so much folly, and never having done or imagined any thing that was not pleasing and useful to the pope and Duke Valentine, I remained quiet, as the affairs of Tuscany and of Camerino appeared to me to be two great enterprises, and with some propriety; besides that my person was every day more caressed in Rome by the Pope, Cardinal of Modena, Trocci, Adrian, Paul Orsino, and Duke Valentine, and the Cardinal of Modena in particular gave me to understand, by the means of an observing friar, a very great friend of mine, that upon his

oath I might be sure he was well acquainted with the whole disposition of the pope; and that he had seen every thing that had been ever written both in France and Germany, and in Venice; and that no mention had ever been made of me, except in the best terms.

So that remaining quiet, and revolving in my own mind how I could best execute the pleasure of your lordship, as I had already given you to understand, with very great desire to send the same by the most illustrious lord prefect, I was advised of the departure of the duke from Rome with all his troops; and in that moment I was sought for by Vitellozzo, who having entered Arezzo with his people, remained in doubt what to do with his thousand infantry as he had not the citadel; to whom I replied that for the holiness of our lord, and the duke, and himself, I was ready to do every thing; but that he should consider that, as the Florentines were under the protection of France, and as I had no particular enmity with the Florentines, he ought to cause a brief to be written in my excuse by the pope, and I as the vicar of our lord would do it; at which he became very angry, and said that he could not do so, and would do without me.

After this the Bishop of Elna arrived at Perosa. He was commissary general of our lord at the enterprise of Camerino, and sent me two Spaniards, gentlemen, with one of the most affectionate letters in the world of our lord, telling me that as he had always known me to be most devoted to the Apostolic See and his holiness, he begged of me to assist in all the enterprises undertaken by the duke, and that I would do whatever the aforesaid bishop would demand of me, to which I immediately replied, that I would do whatever his holiness wished. The Spaniards too told me by word of mouth, that it was necessary the artillery should take the road of Agubbio, Cagli, La Serra, and Sassoferrato, and that I should get the roads put in order, and order oxen, and grant a passage for 1,500 in-

fantry, with provisions; and therefore I sent immediately Messer Dolce with them from the bishop, to let them know that I would very willingly do every thing; and commanded the Commissary of Cagli, and the Lieutenant of Agubbio to do the same.

I wrote afterwards to Messer Dolce, that, as he was at Perosa, he should go and meet the duke as far as Spoletri, and there pay a visit to his excellency; and offer him all that was in our power; by which duke he was received so graciously, and with so many demonstrations of favour, that more could not be done, and he thanked him infinitely, and told him he considered he had no other brother in Italy but myself; and, finally, entreated me most earnestly to give 1,000 infantry to Vitellozzo.

Messer Dolce having returned and told me all, I sent him back immediately to the duke, and gave him to understand, as also at first by the letter of our lord, and those of his excellency I would have done, appearing to me to be satisfied with the King of France; but since a brief could not be had in time, in order to save the whole, that I should request Vitellozzo to send one of his men into my state to collect the said infantry, and I would spend 1,000 ducats of my own, and would collect five hundred infantry, appearing to me sufficient, because the news afterwards arrived that Vitellozzo had gained the citadel, and therefore it was not necessary for him to doubt any longer; and I put in order a beautiful courser adorned with brocade to send him the following day as a present.

Messer Dolce having departed on the morning, the duke, immediately flying on horseback towards Costacciaro, sent 2,000 infantry from Spoleto before the troops of the artillery could be there, who being accepted by my men, who were commissioned to do so, without further delay pushed on towards Cagli, and the duke afterwards flying after them in the same direction, Messer Dolce found the duke between Cagli



and Cantiano. At that moment I was advised by Fossombrone that of the 2,000 infantry, which the Duke of Romagna had collected, and had been several days in Romagna for the enterprise of Camerino, 1,000 were gone between the island of Fano, Sortolongo and Reforzato, which are the passes between my state and that of the Lord Prefect, and besides the said 1,000 infantry, a man for each house was ordered to go into that of Fano, and that the Count of Montevecchio and S. Lorenzo, who were also at those confines had been many days soldiers of the duke.

As I listened, for the space of an hour, to all these things, which were so different from my expectation, as I heard them all at evening, when at supper outside the town, as that was most secure, I returned immediately to Urbino; and when I arrived, an order came from the community of S. Marino, to give me to understand that all the remainder of the infantry of La Romagna, which were 1,000 in number, with a number of commanders, were at Verrucchio and S. Arcangelo; and were in considerable doubt of the issue of their affairs.

The commissary of Cagli writing to me shortly afterwards that the duke was coming as an enemy, and would be the following morning at Urbino, as the place was without defence and very weak in its walls, I resolved, together with the prefect, and three of my people, to go with some bowmen on horseback to S. Leo, a very strong place of mine at Montefeltro, which can only be approached by two passes.

And having thus at four o'clock left orders with my people to act so that the place should suffer no harm, I began my journey, and being arrived at the dawn of day at one of my castles, four miles distant from S. Leo, I heard that the infantry of Verrucchio and St. Arcangelo were not gone to S. Marino, but had taken the passes of S. Leo, and that a very numerous force of the district of Rimini and Cesena had surrounded the whole place.

Hearing of this, and having sent a person to make myself certain of the whole, I took the road towards a place of mine in Montefeltro, called S. Agata, a very good but a weak situation bordering upon the Florentines and the duke; and having reposed there because the horses were dead, first dismissed the bowmen, and dressed myself as a countryman, with three on horseback upon the mares, and the prefect with two of his people, we thought we ought to separate one from the other; and as the prefect repaired towards Valla di Bagno by the most certain road, I took my course between the mountain towards the Florentines, and the castles of the bishopric of Sarsina, places belonging to the Duke of Romagna. When I was distant about fourteen miles from S. Agata, and eight miles distant from the confines, at a river called Borello, a place of Cesena, I was assailed by the country people, who shouting out *Flesh, flesh, kill*, began to follow us up, and took one of my servants, and a guide who was distant from me a bow shot, and who had my portmanteau. We nevertheless fled, and arrived after very great fatigue at Castelnuovo, a place belonging to the most illustrious signiory, very small, and surrounded on every side by the state of Romagna; and having arrived there half dead about dark, I ordered the accident to be communicated in writing to the honoured rulers of Ravenna just as it had happened, and slept there the night. The following day at mid-day a person came to me sent by the governors of Ravenna, which is distant from the above place a little more than twenty-six miles, giving me to understand I ought not to continue there on any account, (I think certainly he had good reasons) as the place appeared to them to be weak, and in the power of the enemy to get hold of it. Having heard this, and begging that he would let me remain until the night, I disguised myself in another way, thinking I was openly going that night to meet my death. It being now between 7 and 8 o'clock, and the governors of Ravenna having sent another man to get me

away, he was taken at Meldola a place of Valentino, and the officer after having examined him as to what he was about, and having heard all he had to say, immediately commanded troops to occupy the passes, and particularly towards Galatea, a place belonging to the Florentines, and the right road of Ravenna. Which having heard of by means of a woman, from Meldola being within a mile of Castelnovo, I immediately considered I ought no longer to wait the night, and having got on horseback with two of my people, and the man belonging to the rulers of Ravenna with two of his, and two guides, we thought to deceive the enemy, neither take the right road to Ravenna, nor Galatea, but go towards Cesena and Bertinoro, which is in the heart of the state of the duke; and thus passing between Bertinoro and Cesena, and having traversed the great road between Forlimpopolo and Cesena, about a mile in the neighbourhood of Cesena, we took our way through certain cross roads towards Ravenna without impediment, which has really been a matter of great wonder. Hardly was it night when we heard, before we came upon the district of Ravenna, but while traversing the country, Cesena, Forlimpopolo, Bertinoro began to fire artillery, to ring the bells to arms, and make signs of fires, and all ran to the places through which we had just before passed. Having rode during the whole night, we arrived at Ravenna at sun-rise, where we have been welcomed by the great governors of that place, as well as throughout the country of Ferrara, and were received yesterday evening here so affectionately by the illustrious lord of this place, that we could desire nothing more.

May your most reverend lordship be pleased to listen to to all I have said, and to pardon me if I have been too prolix. I beseech of you to be pleased to make the most christian king understand all that has occurred, that he may know the same is the pure truth, and will bear any examination before the whole world. And as I hear the duke begins to say that

I had been expelled by the people; let him know that all, who got any account of my departure, did nothing but cry.—I recommend myself to your most reverend lordship, and give you to understand I have no greater desire in the world, than to have the whole of this business examined before the majesty of the king, of whom, as your lordship knows, I have been, and always shall be, a good servant. The prefect, I hope in God's mercy, will be safe, both as he has taken the safest road, and as I have heard nothing ill of him. May you be pleased to hear also that the duke, when arrived afterwards at Urbino, wrote to Mr. John Bentivogli to retain me, and give me over to his hands; and precautions had been taken too towards the sea coast of Sinigaglia, Fano, Pesaro, and Rimini to get hold of me. May you be pleased to know too that, with the exception of my person, I have saved only an under coat and a shirt.

Your most Reverend Lordship's

Most affectionate Servant,

G. DUX URBINI.

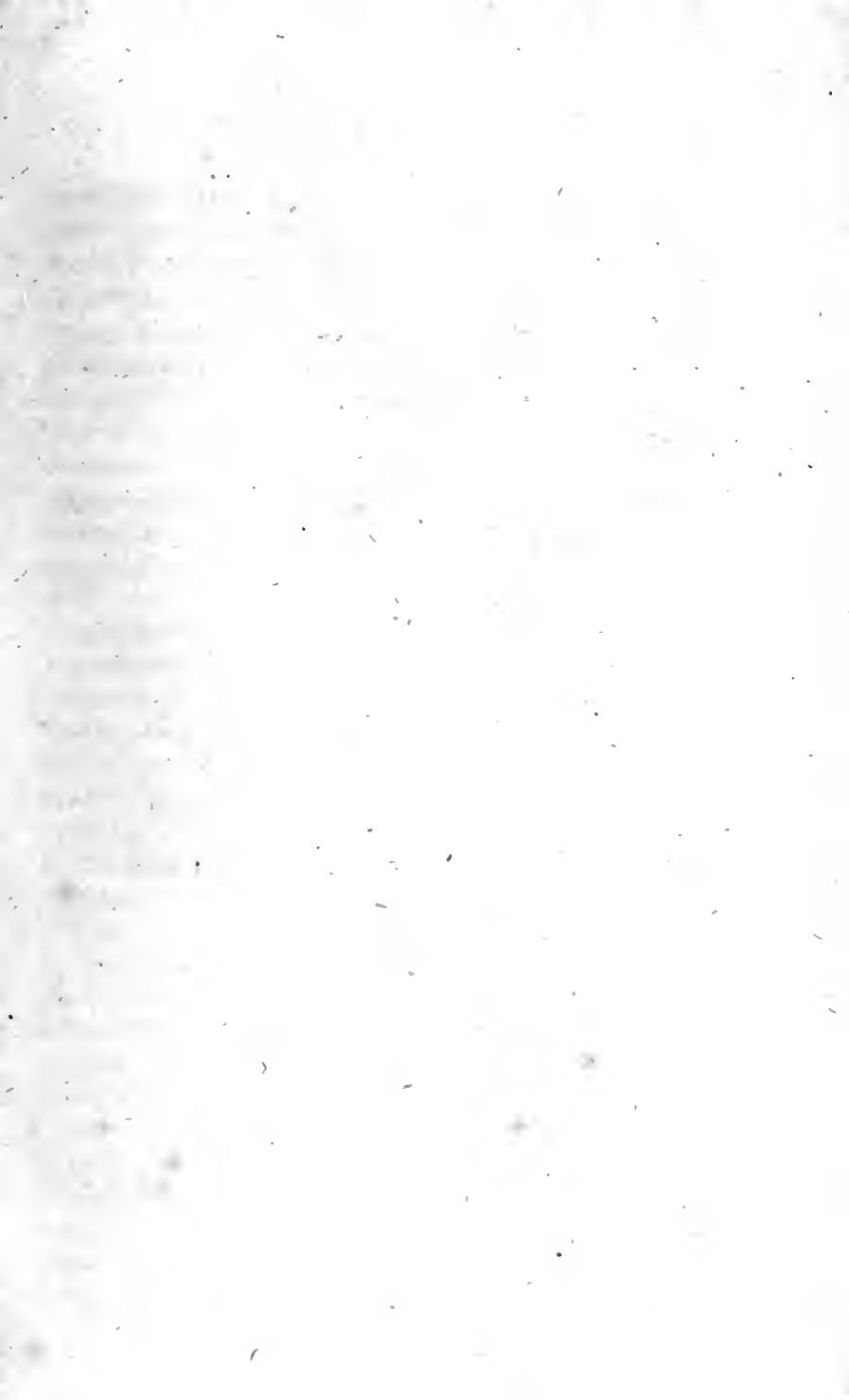
Mantua, 28 June, 1502.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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